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**A MATURE MARITIME STRATEGY FOR AFRICA TO MEET NATIONAL
SECURITY GOALS**

by

Ray A. Stapf

CAPT, United States Navy

**A MATURE MARITIME SECURITY STRATEGY FOR AFRICA TO MEET
NATIONAL SECURITY GOALS**

by

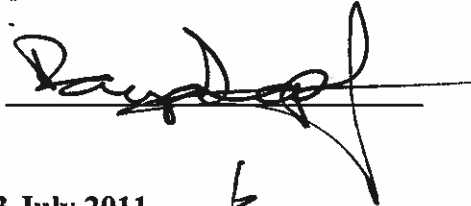
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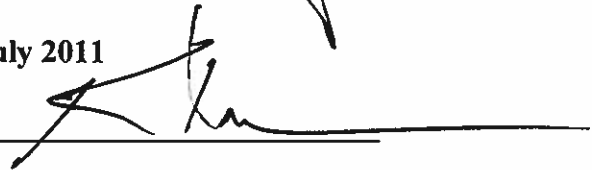
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ABSTRACT

U.S. maritime security and counter-piracy operations in the Somali Basin are informed by an immature strategy that fails to balance strategic ends, ways and means, lacks effective objectives and is deficient of an end-state that supports future withdrawal of U.S. maritime assets. Vast U.S. resources have been and are still employed at the operational level, chasing a Somali Basin problem (piracy) that affects peripheral U.S. national interests at best. In contrast, West African maritime instability and security threats pose a serious risk to vital economic and geographic interests for the U.S., and if left unattended, could lead to costly unplanned military, economic, humanitarian and/or environmental responses in the future.

The West African environment, to include the will of the people, progress in local governance, resource wealth, expanding commerce with the West and the presence of U.S. commercial industry supports the implementation of a mature maritime security strategy that would add significant stability to the African continent, and would curtail the growing maritime instability and criminal activity that threatens U.S. interests. West Africa merits significant U.S. prioritization over the ongoing maritime operations in the Somali Basin. This paper will show that the opportunity is at hand for the U.S. to shift valuable resources, particularly naval assets which are in short supply, from the Somali Basin to West Africa and implement a mature maritime security strategy that can effectively shape the West African maritime environment and ensure the security of vital U.S. interests in the region.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On 09 February 2011 the following news was making headlines across the globe.

Suspected Somali pirates captured a U.S.-bound tanker carrying around \$200 million worth of crude oil in the Indian Ocean on Wednesday in one of the biggest hijackings in the area so far. . . . The hijacking came a day after an Italian tanker carrying oil worth more than \$60 million was snatched by Somali pirates, reinforcing industry fears that the piracy scourge is "spinning out of control". . . . Shipping industry associations have warned that over 40 percent of the world's seaborne oil supply passing through the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea is at risk from Somali pirates, who are able to operate ever further out to sea and for longer periods, using mother ships.¹

Hardly a day goes by without hearing about a pirate attack somewhere in the world, but there is one region of the world that stands out above all others - the waters around Somalia. The Somalia-based pirates are reaching out to sea farther and with more violence than ever before. Of the 119 worldwide attacks so far in 2011, 83 of those have been at the hands of Somali pirates. Since the beginning of the year, seven innocent mariners have been killed, 14 vessels high-jacked, and 250 mariners have been captured and are still being held for ransom. As of 16 March 2011, 28 vessels and 587 hostages are under Somali pirate control. These pirates are on track to carry out nearly 400 attacks in 2011, which is more than 80 percent higher than the 219 attacks Somali pirates carried out in 2010.²

Somali Basin piracy and its rapid expansion over the last several years have garnered the attention of the entire world. In reaction to the growing piracy threat a

¹ Jonathan Saul and Renee Maltezou, *Tanker with \$200 million in oil hijacked off Oman*, msnbc.com. Edited by Reuters. February 09, 2011. http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/41493997/ns/world_news-mideastn_africa/GT1=43001 (accessed February 9, 2011).

² International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), *Piracy News & Figures*, March 16, 2011. <http://www.icc-ccs.org.uk/home/piracy-reporting-centre/piracynewsfigures> (accessed March 18, 2011). Provides real-time global piracy statistics.

robust international response ensued. The UN, EU, U.S., NATO and numerous other coalition partners are conducting aggressive counter-piracy and maritime security operations in the Gulf of Aden, Horn of Africa, Arabian Sea, Red Sea and Indian Ocean against the Somalia-based pirates. Despite this noteworthy counter-piracy response, especially following the standup of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command's (USNAVCENT) Combined Maritime Force (CMF) in August 2008 and the counter-piracy Combined Task Force (CTF) 151 in January 2009, the number of piracy attacks in the Somali Basin continue to increase at an explosive rate.

It might appear to a casual observer of Somali piracy trends, that the vast U.S. resources being expended to counter piracy in the Somali Basin are necessary and important to U.S. security, however, wherever piracy exists, there will typically be other maritime criminal activity like drug and human trafficking, weapons proliferation, environmental violations, illegal fishing, and even terrorists. When the maritime domain is threatened by piracy and other criminal activity, global security is threatened.³ Somali piracy may indeed threaten global security, but is it a threat to U.S. security? Does Somali piracy demand the response of large numbers of U.S. naval vessels, indicating that the Somali Basin is an important strategic region for the United States? It would seem so, given the actions of USNAVCENT and United States Central Command (USCENTCOM). Currently there are up to 30 vessels from as many as 20 nations conducting maritime security operations in the Somali Basin, and since 2006, the U.S.

³ White House, *The National Strategy for Maritime Security*, Washington, DC:, 20 September 2005. 1-2. States that "more than 80 percent of the world's trade travels by water and forges a global maritime link. About half the world's trade by value, and 90 percent of the general cargo, is transported in containers. Shipping is the heart of the global economy..."

Navy has maintained a naval presence of six or more ships in the Somali Basin that are under the operational control (OPCON) of USCENTCOM's CTF 150 or 151.⁴

However, both the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* (September 2005) and the *Policy for the Repression of Piracy and other Criminal Acts of Violence at Sea* (June 2007) call for effects and objectives that are not part of the counter-piracy operations currently underway in the Somali Basin. In addition, the U.S. Navy is no longer capable of providing security for all possible threats to world commerce. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the end of the Cold War, the U.S. Navy ship inventory has been reduced to less than half of what it was during the Reagan era 600 ship navy. In the last decade the U.S. Navy has found itself supporting two war fronts in Afghanistan and Iraq, a no-fly zone in Libya, counter-narcotic operations in South and Central America, explosive growth in daring pirate raids on shipping from Southeast Asia to West Africa, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) missions, non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO), and increased global force presence requirements.

The combatant commanders' demand for forward postured naval forces—particularly carrier strike groups (CSGs), amphibious ready groups with embarked Marine expeditionary units (ARG/MEUs), and surface action groups—exceeds the current and forecast capacity of the Naval Service. Since 2007 the combatant commanders' cumulative requests for naval forces have grown 29 percent for CSGs, 76 percent for surface combatants, 86 percent for ARG/MEUs, and 53 percent for individually deployed amphibious ships.⁵

⁴ Andrew J. Shapiro, *Remarks to International Institute for Strategic Affairs*, U.S. Department of State, March 30, 2011. Mr. Shapiro made reference that as many as 30 vessels from 20 different nations are operating in the Somalia Basin at any given time. The authors personal observations as a U.S. Navy global force manager from 2007 to 2010, and personal deployments to the Somali Basin in 2006 and 2007, supports the statement that the U.S. Navy has six or more ships conducting maritime security operations in the Somali Basin at any given time.

⁵ U.S. Navy, Marine Corp and Coast Guard, *Naval Operations Concept 2010 (NOC 10)*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010.

U.S. naval capacity in 2011 is incapable of fulfilling the combatant commander demand signal. Combining that with a rising national debt level and austere finances, U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) budget cuts are at their highest level since post World War II, and it has become apparent that high demand low density naval assets have to be employed at the right time and place, and for the right purpose. This raises the question, whether or not the vast U.S. naval resources being employed in the Somali Basin are satisfying U.S. vital interests.

If the Somali Basin is not part of our vital interests, then where should U.S. naval power be employed in order to support national interests for maritime security and suppression of piracy? There are security threats and instability throughout the African continent which are characterized by corrupt governments, poverty, piracy, poaching in territorial waters, terrorist cells, militant youth activities, environmental violations, illegal oil bunkering, oil pipeline destruction, drug trafficking, slavery and illicit arms networks. The *National Strategy for Maritime Security* and the *Policy for the Repression of Piracy and other Criminal Acts of Violence* are sound if properly implemented with a whole of government approach in regions with maritime distress that are, or have the potential to impact vital U.S. national interests. Good national strategy that informs combatant and component commanders through the *National Defense and Military Strategies* can and should lead to a highly effective and mature theater strategy that satisfies vital national interests.

The coastal nations of West Africa comprise an important geographical region suffering from vast maritime instabilities. The distressed coastal environment in West Africa is complex and is threatened by more than just piracy. Illicit trafficking, severe

environmental violations and many other debilitating maritime activities get conveyed ashore and directly impact the security and well-being of the local populace, as well as the stability of fragile democratic governments. U.S. and international authorities estimate that approximately 80% of the illicit drugs entering West Africa arrive via the sea, exponentially increasing the maritime threat and instability in the region.⁶ “Since 2006, between 20-40 tons of cocaine per year is transiting through the region *en route* to Europe. With 20 tons valued at approximately \$1 billion on the wholesale market - a sum higher than the GDP of some West African countries.”⁷ “In the three years between 2005 and 2007, some 33 tons of cocaine have been seized, bound for Europe via West Africa. Prior to that time, seizures for the entire continent had rarely exceeded one ton annually.”⁸ The Gulf of Mexico oil spill from the Deepwater Horizon offshore oil rig, during the spring and summer of 2010, has been called the largest accidental marine oil spill in the history of the petroleum industry, and the White House energy adviser Carol Browner said the spill is the “worst environmental disaster the U.S. has faced.”⁹ Despite the enormity of the Gulf oil spill, estimated at 205 million gallons, it does not seem near as dire when compared to the nearly 11 million gallons of oil per year being spilled in the

⁶ Liana Sun Wyler and Nicolas Cook, *Illegal Drug Trade in Africa: Trends and U.S. Policy*, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2010. 13. The 80 percent estimate is for seaborne traffick.

⁷ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *West and Central Africa; The Problem of Drug and Organized Crime in West and Central Africa*, <http://www.unodc.org/westandcentralafrica/en/regional-programme-framework.html> (accessed 20 November 2010).

⁸ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Cocaine Trafficking in West Africa: The Threat to Stability and Development (with special reference to Guinea-Bissau)*, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/West%20Africa%20cocaine%20report_10%2012%2007.pdf (accessed 10 March 2011). 5.

⁹ Carol Browner, Interview by David Gregory, August 8, 2010, on *NBC's Meet the Press*, Transcript at msnbc.com, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/38593566/ns/meet_the_press-transcripts/t/meet-press-transcript-august/ (accessed 17 March 2011).

Niger Delta since the 1960s.¹⁰ This paper will show that there are important and vital U.S. interests that depend on a safe and secure West African maritime domain, not the least of which is the United States' critical dependency on oil from this coastal region.

The purpose of this paper is to show that U.S. maritime security and counter-piracy operations in the Somali Basin are informed by an immature strategy that fails to balance strategic ends, ways and means, lacks effective objectives and is deficient of an end-state that supports future withdrawal of U.S. maritime assets. Vast U.S. resources have been and are still employed at the operational level, chasing a Somali Basin problem (piracy) that affects peripheral U.S. national interests at best. In contrast, the paper will show that West African maritime instability and security threats pose a serious risk to vital economic and geographic interests for the U.S., and if left unattended, could lead to costly unplanned military, economic, humanitarian and/or environmental responses in the future.

The West African environment, to include the will of the people, progress in local governance, resource wealth, expanding commerce with the West and the presence of U.S. commercial industry supports the implementation of a mature maritime security strategy that would add significant stability to the African continent, and would curtail the growing maritime instability and criminal activity that threatens U.S. interests. After showing that West Africa merits significant U.S. prioritization over the ongoing maritime operations in the Somali Basin, the paper will recommend a shift of U.S. resources, particularly naval assets which are in short supply, from the Somali Basin to West Africa,

¹⁰ As many as 546 million gallons of oil spilled into the Niger Delta over the last five decades, or nearly 11 million gallons a year. This was concluded by a team of experts for the Nigerian government and international and local environmental groups in a 2006 report.

and offer a basic concept of operations that supports a mature maritime security strategy at the national and theater level.

The development of this thesis involved the review of a large range of sources, including U.S. national policy and strategy documents, congressional research studies and testimonies, naval and joint doctrine publications, various U.S. Departmental and Agency statistics and reports, and multiple other international documents as they pertained to African maritime security and other international, U.S. and regional interests. This paper will not only inform combatant command theater level strategy and force requirements, but also provide awareness at the national strategic level that today's global complexity and diverse regional threats demand a prioritization of the limited U.S. resources available to conduct environmental shaping operations.

It is imperative that U.S. national strategy and policy establish geographical and economic priorities with a long-range understanding of where U.S. vital interests lie. This paper will begin by presenting a description of the Somali Basin and West African security environment, as well as an understanding of the factors that led to the maritime instability and security risks in these regions. The paper will argue that the maritime security and counter-piracy operations that are being conducted in the Somali Basin are informed by an immature strategy that does not support U.S. vital interests.

Preventing the shortcomings of an immature strategy, the paper will show that West Africa¹¹ offers an opportunity to launch a mature strategy embracing a whole of government approach that can successfully shape the West African maritime environment

¹¹ The coastal nations of West Africa, which will simply be referred to as West Africa through the remainder of this paper are the 25 member states, to include the five landlocked states (Bukina Faso, Central African Republic, Mali, Niger and Chad) in the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA), with Mauritania in the north and Angola in the south.

for sustained stability and security. An end state that achieves regional law and order and promotes peace, security and opportunity will secure vital U.S. interests and will strengthen a partnership with African nations embracing long-term U.S. security interests. Pursuit of this mature strategy supports the redeployment of strategic assets to other priority regions in the world.

CHAPTER 2: REFLECTIONS OF AN IMMATURE MARITIME SECURITY STRATEGY IN THE SOMALI BASIN

National security strategy is as important today as it was following World War II when it was first developed for the containment of the Soviet Union. In this era of globalization, the security environment is more complex and dynamic than ever before. As a global super power, the U.S. has vast responsibilities and international expectations to support security, peace and prosperity. The *2010 National Security Strategy* calls for:

- The security of the United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners;
- A strong, innovative, and growing U.S. economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity;
- Respect for universal values at home and around the world; and
- An international order advanced by U.S. leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges.¹

These interests demand the employment of all instruments of national power (diplomacy, information, military and economic) on a global scale. Because no nation has unlimited capacity for the employment of the instruments of national power, a good strategy must be balanced and prioritized. If the strategic ends, ways, and means are out of balance, accomplishment of the strategic objectives are at risk, or at best, partially satisfied through the inefficient use of limited resources. Even more important than a balanced strategy, the strategic objectives must be prioritized with respect to national interests. If the U.S. engages with ill-defined or short-sighted strategic objectives that do not satisfy vital or important national interests, the U.S. risks economic insolvency and status as a world power.

¹ White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington, DC:, May 2010. 7.

This chapter will show that U.S. maritime security and counter-piracy operations in the Somali Basin are based on ill-defined and short-sighted objectives that characterize an immature strategy that fails to balance strategic ends, ways and means. Most significantly, it employs vast U.S. resources chasing a Somali Basin problem (piracy) that affects only peripheral U.S. interests.

In December of 2008 the National Security Council promulgated the *2008 Partnership and Action Plan for Countering Piracy Off the Horn of Africa* (NSC 2008 Action Plan) which implemented the September 2005 *National Strategy for Maritime Security* (NSMS) and the June 2007 *Policy for the Repression of Piracy and other Criminal Acts of Violence at Sea* (Piracy Policy) as it applied to the Horn of Africa (HOA). While the global maritime strategic objectives in the Piracy Policy and the NSMS are well crafted, the NSC 2008 Action Plan implementation of the NSMS in the Somali Basin prioritized a region with maritime security issues that did not threaten U.S. vital interests. Additionally, the NSC 2008 Action Plan specified lines of action that compounded an already costly and ineffective counter-piracy operation. The focus on disrupting and preventing acts of piracy within the maritime domain and the prosecution of suspected pirates did little to address the true source of the problem. The NSC plan of action led USCENTCOM to continue to operationalize costly counter-piracy efforts that lack effective objectives toward a deficient end-state.

The Somali Basin Environment

Critical to a well-designed strategy is an understanding of the dynamic and complex environment that shapes regional conditions. A strategy that lacks an understanding of the regional issues and how those issues influence national security

interests and objectives is at risk of being immature. An immature strategy can lead to a flawed operational design that fails to satisfy national objectives and regional end-states while misapplying scarce resources. The Somali Basin environment is a case in point. Examining this environment will allow an assessment of some of the root causes of piracy and other maritime criminal activity in the region in order to make an assessment of their application to U.S. national security interests and objectives.

The Somali Basin refers to the bodies of water off the Horn of Africa and the east coast of Africa down to Madagascar, as well as the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Strait of Bab-el Mandeb, Arabian Sea, Strait of Hormuz and the western Indian Ocean. These are the waters in which Somali-based pirates operate. The Strait of Hormuz, Bab-el Mandeb, and the Suez Canal are considered three of the world's vital chokepoints, and are connected by the transit routes of ships passing to and from the Gulf of Aden, where it is estimated that 25,000 ships per year transit.² Somali-based pirates operate along a 2,300-mile coast and in 2.5 million square miles of ocean and pose an increasing threat to chemical and oil tankers, freighters, cruise ships, yachts, and fishing vessels.³

Historically, Somali pirates rarely conducted their activities more than 200 to 300 miles from the Somalia coast, but in the last few years they have expanded their illicit operations deep in to the Red Sea, Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. It is not uncommon for Somali pirates to operate several hundred miles from their home base for weeks at a time. Late in 2010 the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) began to see a significant

² U.S. Congress. House of Representatives, *Hearing: International Piracy on the High Seas*, 04 February 2009. Testimony by Ted N. Branch, Rear Admiral, USN, to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Marine Transportation cited 25,000 ships per year.

³ U.S. National Security Council, *Countering Piracy Off the Horn of Africa: Partnership & Action Plan of 2008*, December 12, 2008. 3. Here after referred to as the NSC 2008 Action Plan.

rise in the use of mother ships, which are hijacked ocean going fishing and merchant vessels, that enable the Somali-based pirate to attack unsuspecting vessels far out to sea. With the use of mother ships, the pirate's capacity and capability is greatly enhanced and with enough fuel the pirates can attack anywhere within the Somali Basin and beyond.⁴

As of 16 March 2011, Somali pirates accounted for 70 percent of the worldwide pirate attacks and were holding 28 vessels and 587 mariners hostage inside Somali territorial waters.⁵ Between 1998 and 2008, Somali-based piracy increased at a 19.4 percent annual rate, with 19 attacks in 1998 and 132 attacks in 2008.⁶ Since 2009 the number of pirate attacks have increased dramatically from 138 to 219 attacks in 2010, and 2011 attacks are projected to be as high as 400.⁷ With Somali pirates holding more than 95 percent of the worlds hijacked vessels and more than 85 percent of the maritime hostages it is not surprising, that the Somali Basin has become the focus of international concern. Along with this heightened concern comes the urge to do something.

U.S., NATO, EU and other international maritime patrols and surveillance in the Gulf of Aden has increased significantly since 2008, but the pirates remain as elusive as

⁴ Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, *Horn of Africa: Threat Factors for Commercial Shipping and Forecast of Pirate Activity Through 2009*, Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 2009, http://www.marad.dot.gov/documents/Factors_Affecting_Pirate_Success_HOA.pdf, (accessed 12 December 2010). In 2009, pirates have displayed the capability to conduct operations with success at unprecedented distances off the east coast of Somalia, reaching as far as 910NM from the coast. In April and May 2009, five attacks occurred within a 170NM radius of Port Victoria, Seychelles; two of these attacks resulted in hijackings. Four additional incidents occurred, one of which occurred 275NM east of the Seychelles, and three of which occurred south of the Seychelles-- a distance of 880NM from Somalia.

⁵ International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), *Piracy News & Figures*, March 16, 2011. <http://www.icc-ccs.org.uk/home/piracy-reporting-centre/piracynewsfigures> (accessed March 18, 2011). Provides real-time global piracy statistics.

⁶ U.S. Department of Transportation, *International Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Hindering Maritime Trade and Water Transportation Around the World*, Special Report from the RITA Bureau of Transportation Statistics. Table 1.

⁷ ICC International Maritime Bureau, *Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Annual Report 1 January - 31 December 2010*, Table 1.

ever. A *Congressional Research Report* indicates that most pirate attacks take fifteen to thirty minutes from initial pirate sighting, to boarding and seizing of hostages. If naval patrol vessels are not within a few miles of the pirate attack, it is highly unlikely a patrol ship could prevent the capture of an attacked vessel.⁸

The motivation behind most Somali pirate attacks has been and remains the lucrative ransom payments received from ship owners and operators for the release of their captured vessels and crews. “The most profitable year ever for the pirates was 2008, with Kenya's foreign minister stating that more than \$150 million was paid in ransoms. Piracy is an industry that awards handsome profits and is an increasingly attractive option in a country with dwindling economic opportunities.”⁹ Department of State official Andrew J. Shapiro reported that between January and March of 2010 alone, Somali pirates collected 75-85 million dollars in ransom.¹⁰

U.S. flagged vessels account for less than one percent of the global fleet, making attacks on U.S. vessels a rare event. The majority of the vessels captured and held by Somali pirates are flagged in Panama, United Kingdom, Greece, Thailand, Taiwan, India, Pakistan, and Yemen; the majority of the captured crews are citizens of Russia, India,

⁸ Lauren Ploch, et al, *Piracy Off the Horn of Africa*, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2009. 24. Most defense analysts acknowledge that while the unprecedented level of naval patrols in the area -- conducted by more than fifteen nations -- has deterred some attacks, the area is simply too vast to prevent all incidents. When the *MV Maersk Alabama* was attacked on April 8, 2009, the closest naval vessel, the *U.S.S. Bainbridge*, was approximately 300 nautical miles away. Similarly, the *U.S.S. Bainbridge* was only able to arrive on the scene of an aborted April 14 attack on the *MV Liberty Sun*, a reported 6 hours after the attack ended. With the capture of the oil laden tanker *Sirius Star* in November 2008, nearly 520 miles southeast of the Kenyan coast, it is estimated that five to seven million square miles of Somali Basin waters would require dense naval patrol to protect against Somali-based piracy.

⁹ Shani Ross and Joshua Ben-David. “Somali Piracy: An Escalating Security Dilemma”, *Harvard Africa Policy Journal*, (Spring 2009), 61.

¹⁰ Andrew J. Shapiro, *Remarks to International Institute for Strategic Affairs*. U.S. Department of State, March 30, 2011.

Pakistan and Yemen.¹¹ In the past, Somali pirates have been relatively non-violent, but more recently they have demonstrated an increasing willingness to use violence. Seven innocent mariners have been killed in the first three months of 2011.

There are three dominant pirate groups operating in Somalia. One is in the Puntland region to the north near the ancient town of Eyl, and the other two are in the north central Mudug province near the towns of Harardera and Hobyo. Smaller pirate groups operate along the coastal ports of Bosaso, Qandala, Caluula, Bargaal, Mogadishu and Garad.¹² The African east coast is characterized by a general lack of law and order from the Red Sea southward to South Africa, where the South African Navy is the first credible deterrent to criminal activity in the maritime domain. Somalia has no coastal patrol or naval capability, and Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique maritime capabilities are marginal at best.

Years of challenging economic and environmental conditions have led to high poverty rates and worry over where the next meal will come from. Under these dire conditions, piracy is an acceptable risk and offers lucrative prospects to young unemployed Somali men with families to care for. In recent years there has been such widespread acceptance of the piracy profession; it is arguably one of the leading industries within the failed state of Somalia.

In fact, according to reports, conspicuously extravagant residential buildings have sprung up all over Somalia's poverty-stricken towns, raising questions as to the origins of this unaccounted capital influx. Newfound riches plunders from large shipping corporations as ransom for their crews and cargo have lined the pockets of Somalis and awarded them lavish lifestyles. "They wed the most beautiful girls; they are building big houses; they have new cars; new guns," says Abdi

¹¹ U.S. Department of Transportation , *International Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Hindering Maritime Trade and Water Transportation Around the World*, Special Report from the RITA Bureau of Transportation Statistics. Figure 2.

¹² Ploch, et al. 7.

Farah Juha who lives in Garowe. “Piracy in many ways is socially acceptable. They have become fashionable.” As long as piracy is “trendy” for disenfranchised Somali citizens, the industry can be expected to develop and expand over time.¹³

A nonexistent or severely lacking coastal patrol in east African coastal waters has led to rampant poaching of the fishing industry within the Somali economic exclusion zone. Illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing has practically decimated this critical economic and survival industry.¹⁴ Moreover, years of drought have ruined a once vibrant agricultural base, leading many to engage in illicit activity, including piracy. The 2009 Congressional Research Service report summarizes the current conditions that support piracy.

...poverty, lack of employment, environmental hardship, pitifully low incomes, reduction of pastoralist and maritime resources due to drought and illegal fishing and a volatile security and political situation all contribute to the rise and continuance of piracy in Somalia. While the profitability of piracy appears to be the primary motivating factor for most pirates, other observers argue that since conditions in Somalia make survival difficult for many and prosperity elusive for most, the relative risk of piracy seems diminished.¹⁵

Factors Leading to Piracy

The factors that can lead to or contribute to piracy are generally categorized as poor economic conditions, lack of governance, geographical opportunities and social acceptance of the illicit behavior. When the factors that support piracy are present, the conditions that support other maritime security threats, like maritime terrorism, weapons and narcotics trafficking, illegal fishing and dumping, and human smuggling are also satisfied. The Somali Basin is not immune to these other maritime security threats and they all exist to one degree or another. Somalia is a failed state whose lack of governance and rule of law

¹³ Ross and Ben-David, 60.

¹⁴ Ploch, et al, 8. In 2005 a report from the United Kingdom Department for International Development estimated that Somalis lost one hundred million U.S. dollars to illegal tuna and shrimp fishing in the country’s economic exclusion zone between 2003 and 2004.

¹⁵ Ibid.

fosters criminal activity on land and sea. Its neighboring nations are somewhat more functional, but their governance remains fragile and lacks the capacity to enhance regional security. The east coast of Africa is economically disadvantaged with little regional urbanization and trade. Unlike the west coast of Africa, the region lacks natural resources and the industrial infrastructure to support national growth. Consequently, the area suffers from a low tax base, poor technology and inadequate health and human services.

Geographically, Somalia is optimally positioned on the world map to support and sustain piracy. The Gulf of Aden off of Somalia's northern coast contains much of the shipping traffic going to or coming from the Strait of Bab-el Mandeb, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Suez Canal, which constitute three of the world's high volume strategic chokepoints. Different sources estimate shipping traffic through the Gulf of Aden at 25,000 to 30,000 ships per year which equates to roughly eighty targets per day transiting within easy reach of Somali-based pirates. Additionally, Somalia's 2300 mile coast facilitates easy movement of land based pirate cells throughout the northern, eastern and southern coastal regions. The combination of a broad sweeping coast, mother ship tactics, enhanced communications and surveillance technology, and robust shipping traffic throughout the Somali Basin has enabled Somali pirates to adapt easily to the international armada of naval vessels that started patrolling the Gulf of Aden in 2008.

Despite Somalia's collapse as a functional state in the early 1990s and subsequent civil unrest, Somalia has maintained a weak but functional economy largely based on livestock, remittance/money transfer companies, and telecommunications. The northern Somaliland and Puntland regions demonstrate the most stable economic conditions which may be due in part to their independent governing bodies. Southern Somali is comparatively poorer and suffers from weak economic factors. The poverty level in

Somalia is approximately 43 percent, but economic statistics are questionable since much of the population is nomadic and they move frequently as independent clans when environmental conditions warrant. As an example of statistic variation, the World Bank reports 73 percent of Somalia's population lives on less than two dollars a day, which is significantly higher than the 43 percent poverty reported in the CIA World Factbook.

Poverty in Somalia can be attributed to a number of factors with the most prominent being the absence of an active central government, civil disputes, natural disasters like flooding and droughts, and a marginalized fishing industry that has been overwhelmed by poaching from outside actors and states.¹⁶ Somalia, Eritrea, Aden and Djibouti show little capacity or political will to deal with maritime matters. Piracy cannot be eliminated until the Somali government and other regional states are willing, stable enough, and have the capacity and capability to control the problem from land and sea.

Another factor that entices piracy is the willingness of nations, ship owners and operators to pay large ransoms for the return of their vessels, cargo and crew. Somali pirates have received as much, and likely more than \$150 million in ransom over the past year, adding tremendous incentive to engage in maritime crime. The U.S. Department of State reports that the increase in Somali Basin pirate attacks

over the last year is a direct result of the enormous amounts of ransom now being paid to pirates. The United States has a long tradition of opposing the payment of ransom, and we have worked diligently to discourage or minimize ransoms. But many governments and private entities are paying, often too quickly and to the detriment of future victims, the escalating ransoms that enable the pirates' predatory behavior. Some consider it the cost of doing business. However, every ransom paid which now averages \$4 million per incident and has reached as much as \$9.2 million dollars further institutionalizes the practice of hostage-taking for profit and funds its expansion as a criminal enterprise.¹⁷

¹⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *CIA The World Factbook: Somalia*, April 16, 2011. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/so.html> (accessed April 20, 2011).

¹⁷ Shapiro.

As long as nations and commercial industry pay ransoms, they are being tolerant of the crime and will embolden pirates to conduct further attacks. “Paying ransoms puts other seafarers at increased risk, enables pirates to apply financial leverage to increasing capability, incentivizes piracy, and ultimately provides support to criminal organizations.”¹⁸

Somalia’s dysfunctional and often non-existent government for more than twenty years has been unable to combat piracy. Even though, “on any given day up to 30 vessels from as many as 20 nations are engaged in counter-piracy operations in the region,” piracy remains an ever-present threat.

The NSMS and NSC 2008 Action Plan Disconnect

A mature strategy flows from understanding the political endstate and guidance as well as the nature of the environment and then creating synergy and balance between the ways and means that will create the effects necessary to achieve stated objectives.¹⁹ National policy typically provides the foundation for strategy with its articulation of endstates and guidance regarding resources (means) and capabilities (ways). A strategist’s analysis of the political endstates and guidance yields strategic objectives that provide purpose, focus, and justification for the actions embodied in strategy.

¹⁸ NSC 2008 Action Plan, 13.

¹⁹ Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*. Joint Publication 1-02, Washington, DC:, November 08, 2010. 349. From Joint Publication 1-02 strategy is defined as “the art and science of developing and employing instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national, and/or multinational objectives.” National power emerges from the political, economic, informational, social-psychological, and military domains and when properly employed creates effects that protect or advance national interests relative to other states, actors, or circumstances. The strategic process is all about how (concept or way) leadership will use the power (resources or means) available to the state to exercise control over sets of circumstances and geographic locations to achieve objectives (ends) in accordance with state policy.

Unfortunately the NSC 2008 Action Plan failed to incorporate an endstate and critical guidance that was promulgated in the NSMS and the Piracy Policy. In turn, the NSC 2008 Action Plan resulted in the implementation of an immature piracy suppression strategy in the USCENTCOM Theater of operation that fails to meet the requirements of a mature strategy.

The strategic objectives of the NSMS are to “promote an international maritime security effort that will effectively and efficiently enhance the security of the maritime domain while preserving the freedom of the domain for legitimate pursuits [and to] safeguard the ocean and its resources from unlawful exploitation and intentional critical damage.”²⁰ These objectives address not only piracy and other maritime criminal activity, but also the threat of a terrorist attack that could reach the shores of the U.S., her partners, or allies through traditional maritime operations.

It has been a longstanding objective of the United States to assist regional partners to maintain the maritime sovereignty of their territorial waters, which directly contributes to the partners’ economic development and security.

Preventing unlawful or hostile exploitation of the maritime domain requires that nations collectively improve their capability to monitor activity throughout the domain, establish responsive decision-making architectures, enhance maritime interdiction capacity, develop effective policing protocols, and build intergovernmental cooperation. The United States, in cooperation with its allies, will lead an international effort to improve monitoring and enforcement capabilities through enhanced cooperation at the bilateral, regional, and global level.²¹

²⁰ White House, *The National Strategy for Maritime Security*, Washington, DC:, 20 September 2005. 7.

²¹ Ibid., 12.

The NSMS emphasizes that success in securing the maritime domain will not come from the U.S. acting alone, “but through a powerful coalition of nations maintaining a strong, united, international front.”²²

Recognizing the vastness and complexity of the maritime environment, the NSMS calls for a whole of government approach that “seamlessly employ[s] all instruments of national power in a fully coordinated manner in concert with other nation-states” in order to counter criminal maritime activity.²³ The NSMS directs three actions that are necessary to achieve the strategic objectives: enhance international cooperation, maximize domain awareness and embed security into commercial practices. Enhance international cooperation reemphasizes that maritime insecurity is not solely a U.S. problem, and that “regional maritime security regimes are a major international component of this strategy and are essential for ensuring the effective security of regional seas.”²⁴ To that end,

The United States will also work closely with other governments and international and regional organizations to enhance the maritime security capabilities of other key nations by:

- Offering maritime and port security assistance, training, and consultation;
- Coordinating and prioritizing maritime security assistance and liaison within regions;
- Allocating economic assistance to developing nations for maritime security to enhance security and prosperity;
- Promoting implementation of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and its amendments and other international agreements; and
- Expanding the International Port Security and Maritime Liaison Officer Programs, and the number of agency attachés.²⁵

²² *The National Strategy for Maritime Security*, 13.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 15. The NSMS actually includes five strategic actions, but the last two, deploy layered security and assure continuity of the marine transportation system, are omitted from discussion in this paper since they pertain to defense of the homeland and the restoration of the marine transportation system following a terrorist like attack in the maritime domain.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

Maximize domain awareness calls for “integrating all-source intelligence, law enforcement information, and open-source data from the public and private sectors. It is heavily dependent on information sharing and requires unprecedented cooperation among the various elements of the public and private sectors, both nationally and internationally.”²⁶ With the awareness that commercial industry dominates the high seas in the execution of global trade and commerce and that they are the targets of pirate activity, the third action, embed security into commercial practices, views the private shipping owners and operators as the first line of defense for their own property. Commercial industry must improve their defenses against criminal activity by embedding scalable security measures into their business practices. “Maritime security is best achieved by blending public and private maritime security activities on a global scale into a comprehensive, integrated effort that addresses all maritime threats.”²⁷

Informed by the NSMS and a significant increase in pirate attacks throughout the world, the Piracy Policy was promulgated in June of 2007 as annex B to the NSMS. The motivation behind the policy stems from the fact that:

Piracy threatens U.S. national security interests and the freedom and safety of maritime navigation throughout the world, undermines economic security, and contributes to the destabilization of weak or failed state governance. The combination of illicit activity and violence at sea might also be associated with other maritime challenges, including illegal, unlawful, and unregulated fishing, international smuggling, and terrorism.²⁸

While reiterating and maintaining alignment with the guidance in the NSMS, the following four guiding principles emerge from the Piracy Policy:

²⁶ *The National Strategy for Maritime Security*, 16.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁸ White House, *Maritime Security (Piracy) Policy*. White House, President George W. Bush, June 14, 2007. <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2007/06/20070614-3.html> (accessed December 21, 2010).

1. [The U.S. will] cooperate with other states and international and regional organizations in the repression of piracy and other criminal acts of violence against maritime navigation.
2. [T]he responsibility for countering this threat does not belong exclusively to the United States.
3. [The U.S. will] engage states and international and regional organizations to develop greater resources, capacity, and authorities to repress piracy and maximize inclusion of coalition assets in piracy repression operations.
4. Piracy repression should include diplomatic, military, intelligence, economic, law enforcement, and judicial actions and requires coordination by all departments and agencies of the U.S. Government.²⁹

The Piracy Policy also recognizes that the U.S. response to the threat of piracy will require a regional assessment and prioritization with respect to geography, local politics, and the legal environment. With an understanding that the environmental study and threat assessment will vary the scope of the mission, annex B of the NSMS directs the following seven actions toward the suppression of piracy:

1. Prevent pirate attacks and other criminal acts of violence against U.S. vessels, persons, and interests;
2. Interrupt and terminate acts of piracy consistent with international law and the rights and responsibilities of coastal and flag states;
3. Reduce the vulnerability of the maritime domain to such acts and exploitation when U.S. interests are directly affected;
4. Ensure that those who commit acts of piracy are held accountable for their actions by facilitating the prosecution of suspected pirates and ensure that persons suspected of committing acts of violence against maritime navigation are similarly held accountable by flag and littoral states and, in appropriate cases, the United States;
5. Preserve the freedom of the seas, including high seas freedoms;
6. Protect sea lines of communication; and
7. Continue to lead and support international efforts to repress piracy and other acts of violence against maritime navigation and urge other states to take decisive action both individually and through international efforts.³⁰

Following a 480 percent increase in Somali based piracy between 2007 to 2008, the National Security Council promulgated the *2008 Partnership and Action Plan for Countering Piracy Off the Horn of Africa* in order to implement the NSMS and Piracy

²⁹ Piracy Policy.

³⁰ Ibid.

Policy in the Horn of Africa (HOA).³¹ The NSC 2008 Action Plan states that its objective is “to repress piracy off the Horn of Africa in the interest of the global economy, freedom of navigation, Somalia, and the regional states,” but offers minimal if any help to Somalia and the other regional states despite its recognition that “long-term actions to establish governance, rule of law, security, and economic development in Somalia are necessary to repress piracy fully and sustainably in the region.”³²

The NSC 2008 Action Plan implements three distinct lines of action in the HOA:

1. Prevent pirate attacks by reducing the vulnerability of the maritime domain to piracy;
2. Disrupt acts of piracy consistent with international law and the rights and responsibilities of coastal and flag States; and
3. Ensure that those who commit acts of piracy are held accountable for their actions by facilitating the prosecution of suspected pirates by flag, victim and coastal States, and, in appropriate cases, the United States.³³

There are four components to the first line of action with the first being the establishment of an international contact group. The second component is to strengthen and encourage the use of the Maritime Security Patrol Area (MSPA) in the Gulf of Aden. The third component calls for commercial industry to update their ships security assessments and plans which requires a commitment from ship owners and operators to accept the costs and responsibility for improving shipboard anti-piracy measures. The final component is a strategic communications plan that calls for assisting the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to develop strategies to protect Somali fishing rights.

³¹ ICC International Maritime Bureau, *Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Annual Report 1 January - 31 December 2010*. Table 1. Shows that there were 93 Somali based pirate attacks/attempts in 2008 versus 16 in 2007.

³² NSC 2008 Action Plan. 4.

³³ Ibid., 9.

The second line of action in the NSC 2008 Action Plan (interrupt and terminate acts of piracy consistent with international law and the rights and responsibilities of coastal and flag states) includes the following six component objectives:

1. Support and Contribute to a Regionally Based Counter-Piracy Coordination Center (CPCC);
2. Seize and Destroy Vessels Outfitted for Piracy and Related Equipment;
3. Persistent Interdiction-Capable Presence;
4. Support Shiprider Programs and Other Bilateral and Regional Counter-Piracy Agreements and Arrangements;
5. Disrupt and Dismantle Pirate Bases Ashore; and
6. Disrupt Pirate Revenue³⁴

The third line of action (Ensure that those who commit acts of piracy are held accountable for their actions) is applicable only after the crime has been committed, instead of prioritizing operational activities that would prevent a pirate attack from being initiated.

As the analysis of the Somali Basin in the previous chapter indicates, the problem of piracy is linked to several key factors, including lack of governance, no rule of law, environmental disasters related to agriculture, illegal fishing, and weak regional governments incapable of enforcing maritime law. The NSC 2008 Action Plan is policy driven not strategy driven. It attempts to cloak policy in strategic language. The action plan confuses lines of action with objectives. What it terms objectives are actually tasks or key actions that fail to achieve a larger objective that supports both national strategic and theater strategic endstates. The lines of action only serve to focus on the visible symptom, not the actual cause of piracy. It does not articulate any strategic rationale for the United States to be the lead nation in this international effort.

USCENTCOM implemented the NSC Action Plan as directed, but because the NSC guidance fails to identify strategic objectives or link them to national

³⁴ Ibid., 10-12.

and theater level strategic endstates, the result is predictable: a misapplication of scarce resources directed at the wrong target for vague and ill-considered policy goals rather than national strategic goals.

Even though the NSC 2008 Action Plan acknowledges the guidance and direction of the NSMS and Piracy Policy, its lines of action do not address the sources of the piracy problem nor result in an endstate that makes the Somali Basin stable and secure. This immature strategy cannot repress pirate activities in the Somali Basin while costing the U.S. vast resources in the form of dollars and maritime security presence.

The Root of a Flawed Strategy: No Vital U.S. Interests in the Somali Basin

The challenges in the Somalia Basin are real and are worthy of international attention, but are problems in the Somali Basin related to the core U.S. national interests of security, prosperity, values and international order, as promulgated by the *National Security Strategy* (NSS)? Is CENTCOM's implementation of the NSC Action Plan reinforcing President Obama's priorities for African engagement (supporting strong and sustainable democracies and good governance; foster sustained economic growth and development; increase access to quality health and education; and help to prevent, mitigate, and resolve armed conflict)?³⁵ Informed by national policy and strategy, national strategic interests in Africa fall within the following categories: oil and global

³⁵ U.S. Africa Command. *2010 Posture Statement, United States Africa Command*, Testimony, Stuttgart: U.S. Africa Command, 2010. 3. Refers to President Obama's four priorities with respect to the U.S. governments engagement in Africa.

trade, maritime security, armed conflict, violent extremism, and prevention of HIV/AIDS.³⁶

The U.S. national interest in African HIV/AIDS is informed by the NSS global health strategy, which falls under the larger core U.S. interest of national values. While African HIV/AIDS is a legitimate concern that is receiving U.S. support through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), it does not rise to the level of an important or vital interest to U.S. security.³⁷

The national interests of limiting armed conflict and countering violent extremism are also informed by the NSS and policy guidance. While these threats may aspire to the level of an important or vital U.S. interest, they both fall beyond the scope of this paper which is focusing on maritime security issues.

Of these five categories of national strategic interest, two are closely linked. Free and secure global trade on the high seas and oil shipments require a secure maritime environment. Criminal activity at sea can threaten a nation's economic stability and future prosperity. African oil, global trade, and the maritime security are identified in the NSS as a core interest for U.S. economic security and prosperity. Additionally, the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* (NSMS) and the *Policy for the Repression of Piracy and other Criminal Acts of Violence at Sea* (Piracy Policy) both address global trade and maritime security as supporting U.S. national and regional strategic interests in Africa. The problems in the Somali Basin do not pose a vital or important threat to U.S.

³⁶ Lauren Ploch, *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa*, April 2010. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service. 14-19.

³⁷ Princeton N. Lyman, "No Good Deed Goes Unpunished", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 89, 4. (August 2010): 74. This reference documents that U.S. has funded the PEPFAR program with \$25 billion between 2003 and 2008.

economic security or prosperity. The NSC Action Plan mistakenly promoted piracy suppression in the Somali Basin as a vital interest to U.S. economic security and prosperity. Despite the fact that piracy in the Somali Basin is a very real problem, the ongoing U.S. military actions to suppress piracy were misinformed by an NSC directive that prioritized a peripheral problem to the level of a vital national interest. In turn, USCENTCOM, the U.S. Navy, and numerous other valuable resources are being employed to address a problem that poses minimal risk to U.S. strategic interests.

It is interesting to note that a review of the U.S. oil import statistics from 2004 through 2009 reveals that the oil exporter nations to the U.S. from the Americas and from West and North Africa demonstrate that the U.S. is no longer dependent on Middle East oil for economic security and prosperity and could realistically satisfy her oil import requirements from sources in the strategic Western Hemisphere.³⁸

In May 2001 U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney headed the National Energy Policy Development Group, which established the diversification of U.S. oil imports as a national priority. The National Energy Policy Development Group report concluded that “[w]e can strengthen our own energy security and the shared prosperity of the global economy by working cooperatively with key countries and institutions to expand the sources and types of global energy supplies.”³⁹ The report noted the shift of U.S. oil imports originating from the Western Hemisphere, the North Sea, and West Africa versus

³⁸ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *U.S. Imports by Country of Origin for Petroleum & Other Liquid*, July 29, 2010. http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/dnav/pet/pet_move_impcus_a2_nus_ep00_im0_mbbbl_a.htm (accessed February 19, 2011).

³⁹ U.S. Vice President, *Report of the National Energy Policy Development Group*, U.S. Policy Report, Washington, DC: (2001). 8-3.

the traditional sources from the Middle East.⁴⁰ Following the 2001 changes to the U.S. energy policy, U.S. oil imports from the Middle East decreased from 24 percent in 2000 to 14.4 percent in 2010.⁴¹

Arguably, the geographical regions and global commons that are critical to U.S. energy security today and in the future are no longer in the Middle East. Of the 15.5 million barrels per day (bbl/d) of oil exiting the Persian Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz (SOH) in 2009, approximately 75 percent continued east to Asian markets where the largest customers were Japan, India, South Korea, and China. Another 3.2 million bbl/d of oil passed north and south through the Strait of Bab-el Mandeb (SOB), with nearly 50 percent of that volume going to or coming from the Suez Canal.⁴² The vast majority of southbound oil through the Suez Canal comes from Turkey, Libya and the Netherlands and is shipped to Singapore, India and China. These are the three largest recipients of oil originating north of the Suez Canal.⁴³ The largest exporters of oil passing northbound through the Suez Canal are Saudi Arabia, India, Iran, Kuwait, Singapore and the U.A.E; and the top importers of the northbound oil in 2009 were the Netherlands,

⁴⁰ *Report of the National Energy Policy Development Group*. 8-1.

⁴¹ The 24 percent figure for Middle East oil imports in 2000 comes from the *National Energy Policy Development Group* 2001 report and the 14.4% figure for Middle East oil imports in 2009 comes from the EIA Report, U.S. Imports by Country of Origin for Petroleum & Other Liquids, and is located on the EIA website at http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/dnav/pet/pet_move_impqus_a2_nus_ep00_im0_mbb1_a.htm, (accessed 19 February 2011).

⁴² U.S. Energy and Information Administration, *Country Analysis Briefs, World Oil Transit Choke Points*. February 2011. http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/World_Oil_Transit_Chokepoints/Full.html (accessed March 23, 2011). 1-2. 2009 oil shipment statistics through the Straits of Hormuz and Bab-El-Mandeb are found on page 1. Reference to Japan, India, South Korea and China being the largest consumers of oil leaving the Persian Gulf is found on page 2.

⁴³ Suez Canal Authority (SCA), "Suez Canal Traffic Statistics", Suez Canal, 2009. Table 21-1. <http://www.suezcanal.gov.eg/> (accessed December 22, 2011).

Spain, France, Italy and the United Kingdom.⁴⁴ The U.S. only imported 617 million barrels of oil from Persian Gulf states in 2009, which equates to approximately eight percent of the daily oil shipments through the Somali Basin.⁴⁵ Clearly, the U.S. has an interest in secure oil shipments through the Somali Basin, but analysis of the import/export statistics by country of origin shows that the Netherlands, Spain, France, Italy, Turkey, Libya and the United Kingdom to the west; and Japan, India, South Korea, China, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, U.A.E and Singapore in the Middle and Far East should have significantly greater concerns with Somali Basin maritime security. In fact roughly 89 percent of Japan's oil imports in December of 2009 originated from the Persian Gulf.⁴⁶

The rapid decline in U.S. demand for Persian Gulf oil has been complimented by a corresponding rise in oil imports from West and North Africa and Brazil. In 2009 the U.S. imported more oil from West and North African nations than it did from the entire Persian Gulf at 797.1 million barrels of oil, predominantly originating from Nigeria, Angola and Algeria, but with substantial minority imports from Equatorial Guinea, Congo, Chad, Gabon, Cameroon and Libya. Oil imports from North, Central and South America satisfied 55 percent of the U.S. oil import requirements in 2009 at 2,344.5 million barrels, with the vast majority of that oil originating in Canada, Mexico,

⁴⁴ *Suez Canal Traffic Statistics*. Table 24-1.

⁴⁵ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *U.S. Imports by Country of Origin for Petroleum & Other Liquids*.

⁴⁶ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *International Petroleum (Oil) Imports and Exports*, July 2010. <http://www.eia.gov/emeu/international/oiltrade.html> (accessed March 23, 2011). From the table for Japan's most recent 12 months Japan imported 4.077 million barrels per day of their total imports (4.601 million barrels per day) from the Persian Gulf in December of 2009.

Venezuela, Brazil, Virgin Islands (U.S.) and Columbia.⁴⁷ It is imperative that future U.S. policy and strategy focus on engagements in the strategic Western Hemisphere to secure a large part of U.S. global trade, including its future energy requirements.⁴⁸

Even though seven-and-a-half percent of the world's total ocean trade transits the Suez Canal, U.S. imports and exports through the Suez Canal are minimal.⁴⁹ Over 71 percent of the Suez Canal southbound traffic and more than 86 percent of northbound traffic passes through the pirate infested waters of the Gulf of Aden (GOA) and the Horn of Africa (HOA). The southbound traffic that terminates in the Red Sea is about 28 percent of the total southbound traffic, and nearly 14 percent of the northbound traffic originates in the Red Sea. More than 17,200 ships transited the Suez Canal in 2009 and the southbound traffic from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea accounted for 295.4 million tons of cargo. The northbound traffic totaled 263.9 million tons in 2009, and of that cargo only 13 million tons or 4.9 percent was bound for America. The nations with the greatest dependency on the Suez Canal for southbound exports to the Middle and Far East are those nations in Western and Northern Europe where each accounted for 25.9 percent and 21.9 percent respectively of the total southbound cargo shipped through the Suez Canal in 2009. The importers with the greatest dependency on the southbound cargo are those

⁴⁷ U.S. Energy Information and Administration, *U.S. Imports by Country of Origin for Petroleum & Other Liquids in 2009*.

⁴⁸ It is the author's opinion and as argued in this paper, that the coastal nations of West Africa are part of the strategic Western Hemisphere.

⁴⁹ World Shipping Council, "The Suez Canal - A vital shortcut for global commerce", World Shipping Council, Partners in Trade. n.d. <http://www.worldshipping.org/pdf/Suez-Canal-Presentation.pdf> (accessed February 23, 2011). If the Suez Canal did not exist, cargo shipments between Western Europe and the Middle East would be forced to transit around Africa adding 8900 kilometers and approximately 10 days to the transit distance. The Suez Canal enables a 43 percent reduction over the alternate transit around the Cape of Good Hope and saves commercial industry more than the \$5 billion a year paid to Egypt in canal transit fees. Despite the unquestionable importance and value of the Suez Canal to global trade, U.S. imports and exports through the Suez Canal are minimal.

nations in the vicinity of the Red Sea, South East Asia, and the Arabian Gulf, who received approximately 28.6, 25.1 and 18.7 percent of the southbound cargo, respectively. Similarly, the nations with the greatest dependency on the Suez Canal for the movement of goods from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean are those in Southeast Asia and the Far East which accounted for 49.8 percent of the northbound shipments, followed by nations in the Arabian Gulf, which accounted for 22.7 percent of the total cargo shipped northbound through the Suez Canal.⁵⁰

While the U.S. dependency on non-oil cargo shipments through the Somali Basin and Suez Canal is minimal, the states north of the Suez Canal with the greatest strategic interest are Italy, Spain, Netherlands, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Belgium and France. The states with greatest strategic interest south of the canal are Saudi Arabia, Singapore, China, Malaysia, India, U.A.E. and Oman.⁵¹ It is not surprising that the list of nations from Europe and the Middle and Far East with the greatest dependency on non-oil cargo shipments through the Suez Canal and Somali Basin are nearly the same states with a strategic interest in the oil that is shipped out of the Arabian Gulf.

In contrast, the U.S. shipments through the Suez Canal, including oil and non-oil products, is less than 5 percent of the total cargo transiting the canal annually. Even more telling, U.S. flagged ships transiting through the pirate infested GOA, in route to or from the Suez Canal, are less than one percent of the shipping traffic through the GOA. The 28 million cargo tons of oil and other products the U.S. imported or exported through the Somali Basin in 2009 only represents 1.2 percent of the more than 2.2 billion cargo tons

⁵⁰ Suez Canal Authority (SCA). Tables 22 and 25.

⁵¹ Ibid., Table 19. Top ten countries with a dependency on Suez Canal cargo shipments.

of goods shipped in and out the U.S. sea ports in 2009, clearly demonstrating that U.S. shipping in the Somali Basin is a peripheral to low interest with respect to U.S. economic trade and security.⁵²

U.S. commerce and trade in and around the Somali Basin is also negligible, with very little opportunity for improvement near-term. To highlight the insignificance of U.S. trade and commerce in the Somali Basin, one only has to look to Canada and China, where the U.S. traded more each day in 2010 with these two countries than it did over an entire year with all East African nations combined.⁵³ Table 1.1 illustrates U.S. import/export data with the East African nations using data from 2005 and 2010.

⁵² American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA), *Port Industry Statistics*, AAPA, American Association of Port Authorities. 2009. http://aapa.files.cms_plus.com/Statistics/2009US_PORTRANKINGS_BY_CARGO_TONNAGE.pdf (accessed December 19, 2011). Subject report provides the data for determining U.S. total cargo tons of goods shipped in to and out of U.S. Sea ports in 2009.

⁵³ U.S. Census Bureau, "Top Trading Partners-Total Trade, Exports, Imports", *U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics* 2010. <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/highlights/top/top1012yr.html> (accessed February 25, 2011).

Table 1.1 U.S. Exports and Imports with East Africa

U.S. import/export data with East African nations for 2005 and 2010 in units of one million dollars U.S.				
Country	Imports		Exports	
	2005	2010	2005	2010
Djibouti	1.1	3.0	47.6	124.4
Somalia	0.3	0.1	8.8	1.5
Kenya	348.0	311.1	573.4	362.7
Tanzania	33.7	42.9	96.4	163.6
Mozambique	11.9	64.7	62.8	225.0
Madagascar	323.6	108.4	28.2	116.0
Eritrea	31.1	2.4	1.3	0.1
Ethiopia	455.6	773.2	61.8	127.9
Sudan	108.1	115.6	13.6	8.1
TOTALS:	1313.4	1421.4	893.9	1129.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "U.S. Trade in Goods (Imports, Exports and Balance) by Country database", *U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics*. 2010. <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/index.html#S> (accessed February 25, 2011).

The pirate threat in the Somali Basin is mitigated by naval patrol and escort services from the European Union Naval Forces (EUNAVFOR) under Operation ATALANTA. Operation ATALANTA is a coalition effort by multiple EU members and

has been conducting piracy suppression and naval escort and protection services in the Somali Basin since December 2008.⁵⁴

Considering that U.S. flagged ships make up less than one percent of the traffic transiting the Gulf of Aden (GOA), the risk to pirate attack is very low, and unlike most nations, the U.S. has mandated that U.S. flagged vessels transiting the GOA or Horn of Africa will employ armed or unarmed security detachments for piracy prevention.⁵⁵ The U.S. policy for non-negotiation with criminals and pirates is a step in the right direction to deter piracy and it needs to be embraced by all shipping owners, operators and flag states. With minimal U.S. commercial shipping in the region, combined with the robust implementation of anti-piracy security measures by U.S. flagged ships, the Somali based piracy poses a minimal risk to the U.S. shipping industry operating in the Somali Basin, and essentially no risk to U.S. economic security and stability.

An Immature Strategy Summarized

The international response to Somali Basin piracy led by the U.S. is laudable and in no way insignificant. The armada assembled in the Gulf of Aden created expectations of quickly mitigating the piracy threat through deterrence and intervention. In contrast, the pirates rapidly adapted and exploited the opportunities created by the asymmetry of the international response and relocated their operations away from the naval patrol

⁵⁴ European Union, *EU Naval Operation Against Piracy (EUNAVFOR Somalia - Operation ATALANTA)*, Vers. EUNAVFOR/28, February 2011. <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/eutm-somalia> (accessed March 18, 2011). This reference documents the EU policy with respect to the security and defense mission in and around Somalia, to include the mission tasks for EUNAVFOR under Operation ATALANTA.

⁵⁵ Maritime Administration, *Advisory 2010-06 GUIDANCE TO VESSELS TRANSITING HIGH RISK WATERS*, Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, March 29, 2010. http://www.marad.dot.gov/news_room_landing_page/maritime_advisories/advisory/advisory2010-06.htm (accessed December 21, 2010).

regions. Since the National Security Council (NSC) implemented the partnership and action plan to counter piracy in the Horn of Africa in December of 2008, piracy has increased at an explosive rate in the Somali Basin. The Somali-based pirates not only relocated their operations in response to the U.S. led counter-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden, but have increased the frequency of their attacks by nearly 100 percent.⁵⁶ Clearly, the counter-piracy efforts informed by the NSC 2008 action plan have been ineffective at securing the East African maritime domain.

Piracy within the Somali Basin is a symptom of the great instability that has dominated Somalia for more than two decades. Somalia is a failed State suffering from economic, social, and political disorder. Devoid of a strong rule of law enforced by an able government, Somali piracy has advanced into a criminal enterprise fueled by million dollar ransoms on the backs of young Somali men just trying to survive. A U.N. sponsored expert group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia concluded:

Poverty, lack of employment, environmental hardship, pitifully low incomes, reduction of pastoralist and maritime resources due to drought and illegal fishing and a volatile security and political situation all contribute to the rise and continuance of piracy in Somalia.⁵⁷

While piracy involves some risk, the benefits to an impoverished Somali outweigh that risk. The African maritime environment presents complex strategic and operational challenges that cannot be solved with military ways and means alone. If counter-piracy efforts in the Somali Basin are going to be effective, lines of operation have to be planned

⁵⁶ ICC International Maritime Bureau. *Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Annual Report 1 January - 31 December 2010*. Documents that Somali based piracy in 2008 was consisting of 111 attacks, which was followed by 218 and 219 attacks respectively in 2010 and 2011, showing an increase of nearly 100 percent between 2008 and the start of 2011.

⁵⁷ International Expert Group on Piracy off the Somali Coast, "Piracy off the Somali Coast, Final Report", *International Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance Network for Fisheries-Related Activities*, November 21, 2008. http://www.imcsnet.org/imcs/docs/somalia_piracy_intl_experts_report_consolidated.pdf (accessed January 18, 2011). 15.

and implemented to go after the source of the problem and prevent pirates from putting out to sea.

In order to plan joint operations that satisfy strategic objectives, planners and commanders must understand the problem, comprehend the operational environment, design an approach to solve the problem, and be able to reframe the problem when circumstances change. General J.N. Mattis' *Vision for a Joint Approach to Operational Design*, October 2009, emphasizes the importance of understanding the problem and reminds planners that observable symptoms to a problem often do not reflect the root cause of the challenge, and can lead to ineffective operations that are chasing symptoms instead of addressing the source of the problem.⁵⁸ The NSC failed to understand, or at least acknowledge, the root causes behind piracy in the Somali Basin before promulgating the NSC 2008 Action Plan. The plan reacted to the highly visible piracy in the Somali Basin, which is only a manifested symptom to a much deeper and complex problem. Despite good intentions, tremendous resources and U.S. commitment to piracy suppression the NSC 2008 Action Plan put in to motion and prioritized lines of operation that attack the symptoms and not the problems that originate on land and spill in to the maritime domain.

The U.S. Piracy Policy says to consider U.S. resources, scope of mission and defined nature of the threat when determining a strategic response.⁵⁹ With limited or inadequate means and only peripheral threats to national security, the U.S. commitment to Somali Basin piracy should have been limited, but instead the issuance of the NSC

⁵⁸ J. N. Mattis, *Vision for a Joint Approach to Operational Design*. Norfolk, VA: U.S. Joint Forces Command , October 6, 2009.

⁵⁹ Piracy Policy.

2008 directive made the problem a strategic priority. Worse, it defined three lines of action, none of which address the root cause of the problem. Scarce U.S. assets are being expended to repress piracy in a maritime region that is minimally linked to U.S. energy and economic interests. In addition, resources are being expended to protect and support the shipping industry that is unwilling to bear the cost to implement effective deterrents and protective measures to thwart piracy.

The shipping industries willingness to pay pirate ransoms and their cost avoidance with respect to implementing preventive measures implies the risks of piracy are acceptable, which begs the question, why is the U.S. Military leading an effort to protect commercial industry from criminal activity? A 2008 *Proceedings* article asserted that the international shipping industry exaggerates the global piracy threat since “profit-oriented businesses loathe implementing costly preventative measures, naturally preferring that international organizations, national law-enforcement agencies, and armed forces take care of the problem instead.”⁶⁰

Multinational shipping corporations, insurers, and vessel masters must all bear some of the burden of responsibility to deter and hinder pirates. Indeed, the commercial sector enjoys huge profits facilitated by maritime security; it also has the means to act against piracy. The IMO promulgates standard, proven anti-piracy practices. Yet vessels and shippers routinely ignore them.⁶¹

USCENTCOM operational activities toward piracy suppression in the Somali Basin can only be reactive to the symptoms of the broader problem. Informed by an immature strategic design, CENTCOM embarked on the mission of satisfying very specific lines of action delineated in the NSC 2008 Action Plan without objectives that supported theater as well as national endstates. Implementing piracy suppression

⁶⁰ John Patch, “*The Overstated Threat*”, United States Naval Institute Proceedings, (December 2008).³⁴.

⁶¹ Ibid.

operations without consideration to the underlying problems and clearly defined objectives has resulted in the employment of vast U.S. military resources to chase pirates – the perceived strategic problem. If military and interagency planners were to go back to the drawing board with an understanding of the problems and strategic objectives, they would recognize that a successful counter-piracy strategy requires lines of operation predominantly supported by diplomatic, informational, law enforcement, and economic instruments of power. In order to achieve lasting maritime security in the Somali Basin, these instruments of power must address the social, economic and governance factors internal to Somalia that lead to piracy. Even the U.S. Naval Central Command commander, Vice Admiral William Gortney, recognized the strategic shortcomings in 2009 when he said, “Ultimately, we knew the solution to the problem of piracy is ashore in Somalia itself. Therefore, I focused the coalition maritime efforts on security and stability operations at sea that would give the international community time to address the long-term solution.”⁶²

⁶² Samantha L. Quigley, *U.S. Department of Defense NEWS*, Edited by American Forces Press Services. (March 5, 2009). <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=53357>

CHAPTER 3: WEST AFRICA, A U.S. OPPORTUNITY

Threats to good order at sea feature prominently in West Africa and particularly in the Gulf of Guinea sub-region. On the surface, the maritime disorder on Africa's western coast -- piracy, illicit trafficking, illegal fishing, environmental abuses and oil bunkering -- appears to be less disturbing than that in the Somali Basin, but it is actually much more complex, and more threatening to U.S. strategic interests. Although piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has not risen to the levels seen in the Somali Basin, the possibility does exist that piracy could increase dramatically in the future.

Maritime insecurity in West Africa is more politically driven and criminal in nature than that seen in the Somali Basin. In the Gulf of Guinea, political currents shape offshore actions, contributing to insecurity and societal dissatisfaction, such as the unsettled environmental conditions promoting maritime instability in the Gulf. Although acts of piracy take place on the sea surface, it is often what is obscure or overlooked that drives the illicit activities of sub-state and non-state actors and threatens the stability of legitimate states.

In contrast to Africa's eastern seaboard, multiple arrangements to promote good order at sea have emerged with an abundance of international and regional security agencies focused on improving maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. This chapter will present an environmental discussion of West Africa as it pertains to the maritime domain. The focus of the environmental review will be to identify those challenges that contribute to maritime instability and security concerns in the region as well as a look at West African opportunities within the maritime domain. With an understanding of the environment the chapter will end by making the argument that West African instability

presents a direct threat to U.S. national interests, and that West Africa is worthy of a strategic design that achieves regional end-states and objectives that protect U.S. interests.

Unlike the Somali Basin, there are important U.S. interests in the Gulf of Guinea and a more than adequate regional foundation to support a mature maritime security strategy to enhance and further U.S. interests. The employment of U.S. naval assets with close interagency, international and regional collaboration can enable the people and nations in the Gulf of Guinea region to achieve long-term maritime security and stability, which would yield valuable economic opportunities and prosperity and contribute to U.S. national economic security.

The Gulf of Guinea Environment

The West African coastal region encompasses twenty coastal countries (Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo) plus five landlocked nations (Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, and Niger), and all 25 are members of the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA), which is an intergovernmental regional body mandated to regulate maritime affairs.¹ The

¹ Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA), *MARITIME ORGANIZATION OF WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA (MOWCA)*. n.d. <http://mowca.org/new%20design/index.html> (accessed March 23, 2011). MOWCA has 25 member nations (Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, and Niger) and was established on 7 May 1975 and is based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. It is an inter-governmental institution for cooperation in the Merchant Navy, the port industry, maritime safety and security, transit transport to and from landlocked member

Gulf of Guinea coastal states account for twelve of the 25 countries listed above (Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, and Togo). The Gulf of Guinea coastline is approximately 3400 miles long and with the 200 NM economic exclusion zone it results in roughly 680,000 square NM defined as the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain. Within the twenty coastal states there are more than 200 functional seaports, with 28 serving deep draft vessels and international trade. The four most prominent ports in the region are located in Lagos, Nigeria; Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire; Dakar, Senegal; and Douala, Cameroon.²

Governance in West Africa is diverse and dynamic. Most of the countries gained their independence following colonial rule in the 1950s and 1960s and have a history of poor governance, corruption, widespread poverty, tribalism and serious economic concerns that have been repeated characteristics in the region since the states gained their independence. Today, all the West African nations (except Mauritania) are recognized as having democratic governments, but several of the countries are still plagued by ineffective and corrupt governance. Guinea, Central African Republic and Niger have

countries, marine environmental protection and the implementation of relevant international conventions. MOWCA is currently working on five major projects which are:

Integrated sub-Regional Coast Guard Network to protect ships, passengers and goods from piracy, terrorism and the pollution and illegal exploitation of the exclusive economic zones of member states; Information and Communications Centre to ensure effective flow of information in the sub-region, assist in the control of ships by the port State and carry out a coordinated inspection of ships in the ports of member states; Facilitation of transit transport and the Sealed Grid System for transporting transit goods across national borders; this project was designed to facilitate the flow of traffic when transporting goods by road; Regional Maritime Fund aimed at creating a capital base for funding sub-regional maritime projects and programs; Regional Maritime Bank to provide solid support for maritime, port and transit transport development in the sub-region.

² Ports.com. n.d. <http://ports.com/browse/africa/> (accessed February 19, 2011). Provides seaport data by country.

only transitioned from military regimes in the last 5 years and the Cote d'Ivoire government is currently in dispute.

The West African region is rich in hydrocarbon resources with oil and natural gas reserves estimated at nearly twice that of North America, and with an abundance of diamonds, gold, manganese, nickel, cobalt, copper, uranium, coffee, and fish, the Gulf of Guinea states have the resources to support a thriving international trade and regional commerce.³ Unlike the Somali Basin, the geography of the West African coastal region does not have any maritime choke points, adding a measure of reliability and convenience to international and local shipping. Since the Bush administration codified the U.S. oil diversification policy in May of 2001, West African imports have been steadily rising in conjunction with lower imports from the Middle East. In 2002 Assistant Secretary of State Walter Kansteiner declared that "African oil is of national strategic interest to us and it will increase and become more important as we go forward".⁴

A multitude of rivers empty into the Gulf of Guinea, contributing to its diverse and economically valuable sea life. The Niger River offers navigable transit to commercial shipping along more than three-quarters of its length. The Niger Delta on the coast of Nigeria covers roughly 20,000 square kilometers. The delta region is home to nearly 20 million people and 40 different ethnic groups, and accounts for 7.5 percent of Nigeria's total land mass. It is the largest wetland and the third largest drainage basin in Africa. The Niger Delta's environment can be broken down into four ecological zones

³ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Country Analysis Brief: Nigeria*. July 2010. <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Nigeria/pdf.pdf> (accessed December 23, 2010). Provides data on reserves.

⁴ Michael T. Klare, "The Foreign Energy Policy of the United States", *Mapping the World*, (March 04, 2008). <http://www.cartografareilpresente.org/article234.html#nb1> (accessed December 23, 2010).

containing one of the highest concentrations of biodiversity on the planet, providing arable land that can sustain a wide variety of crops and lumber. There are more species of freshwater fish in the delta than in any other ecosystem in West Africa. Unfortunately, despite the richness of the Niger Delta, it may very well be the most contaminated and environmentally abused region in the world.

West African oil is very high quality with a good specific density and low sulfur content, which makes it easy to refine and generates higher profit margins. Since the early 1960s, the majority of the region's oil was extracted from the lush Niger Delta, but recent advances in deep-water drilling and extraction technologies is pulling operations farther away from the coast. Soon the majority of the region's oil will be obtained from offshore facilities. Despite the billions of dollars of revenue generated by the oil operations, most of the coastal inhabitants have not benefitted from the oil boom, and have had their livelihoods destroyed or significantly degraded by environmental abuses linked to the oil industry. This has resulted in frequent and often violent demonstrations by tribes fighting for their rights. All Gulf of Guinea states produce oil and natural gas. Nigeria and Angola are the dominant oil producers in the region with Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Chad, Cameroon and Cote d'Ivoire producing significant quantities.⁵ It is no surprise; therefore that U.S. oil demand from West Africa is projected to go up by more than 55 percent between 2010 and 2015.⁶

⁵ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Country Analysis Brief: Nigeria*, July 2010. <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Nigeria/pdf.pdf> (accessed December 23, 2010). 2009 oil and natural gas production data for African nations enabled the author to assess the dominant and marginal oil producers in the Gulf of Guinea. This citation only refers to Nigeria country brief, but all West African country briefs were reviewed in order to determine dominant and marginal producers.

⁶ The author calculated 55 percent from the Intelligence estimate that Gulf of Guinea oil imports to the U.S. are projected to grow from the 2010's 16 percent level to 25 percent in 2015.

The oil boom of the 1970s led Nigeria, the dominant oil producer to neglect its strong agricultural and light manufacturing bases in favor of a crude oil industry. Oil and gas trade accounted for more than 98 percent of Nigeria's export earnings in 2003, contributing to more than 80 percent of the government's revenue. The dramatic decline of traditional economic sectors has led to massive migrations from the rural farming districts to the cities serving the oil industry, which in turn has led to infrastructure destruction and widespread poverty throughout Nigeria's rural districts. Per capita income plunged throughout the 1990s, reaching a low in 2002, which was less than 25 percent of the per capita income enjoyed in the middle 1970s. In recent years Nigeria has made great strides to diversify its source of revenue with the sale of state owned petroleum producing assets, increased investment in agriculture and industrial manufacturing, and avoiding state ownership of the booming deep-water drilling business. These efforts have led to a revitalization of agriculture. As of 2010, the agriculture sector accounts for more than 30 percent of the country's GDP and continues to increase.

Nevertheless, oil production in the Gulf of Guinea will continue to shape regional economies and influence U.S. strategic decisions. The proven oil reserves in Nigeria alone are nearing forty billion barrels and could grow substantially in the near-term.⁷ But this strategic resource is subject to threats. In March of 2000 for example, armed militia members attacked oil workers in Nigeria leading to the temporary shutdown of production of 800,000 barrels per day (bbl/d). In 2005, a similar incident halted the

⁷ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Country Analysis Brief: Nigeria*.

production of 100,000 bbl/d.⁸ Considering that U.S. total oil imports from Nigeria in the first quarter of 2010 were 962,000 bbl/d, disruptions of hundreds of thousands of bb/d of oil flow not only threatens regional economic solvency, but also threatens U.S. energy security, and often impacts oil market prices throughout the world.⁹ According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA):

Since December 2005, Nigeria has experienced increased pipeline vandalism, kidnappings and militant takeovers of oil facilities in the Niger Delta. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) is the main group attacking oil infrastructure for political objectives, claiming to seek a redistribution of oil wealth and greater local control of the sector. Additionally, kidnappings of oil workers for ransom are common. Security concerns have led some oil services firms to pull out of the country and oil workers unions to threaten strikes over security issues.¹⁰

The EIA has estimated Nigeria's oil production capacity to be around 2.9 million bbl/d in late 2009, but as a result of frequent attacks on oil infrastructure, monthly crude oil production has ranged between 1.6 and 2.0 million bbl/d costing the Nigerian economy more than \$80 million a day (with oil prices at \$90 a barrel).¹¹ Local sabotage of industry infrastructure and the theft of oil by siphoning, also referred to as bunkering, has become a major problem in the Niger Delta region. Besides the direct impact on national revenue and corporate profitability, it is causing significant environmental degradation. Damaged oil lines may go unnoticed for days, and repair of the damaged

⁸ David L. Goldwyn and Stephen J. Morrison, "A Strategic US approach to Governance and Security in the Gulf of Guinea", *CSIS: Center for Strategic and International Studies*. (July 2005). http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/0507_gulfofguinea.pdf (accessed March 24, 2011).

⁹ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Country Analysis Brief: Nigeria*. Provides 962,000 bbl/d figure.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid. Report provides name plate production capacity for Nigeria and recent monthly production levels. Author extrapolated the economic cost to Nigeria based on \$90 a barrel oil.

pipes takes even longer. Oil siphoning has become a big business, with the stolen oil quickly making its way onto the black market.¹²

Piracy

Today, in the Gulf of Guinea piracy ranks well below the Somali Basin, Indonesia and the South China Sea with 39 attempted or actual attacks in 2010, it is less than 10 percent of the 445 global pirate attacks in 2010.¹³ However, the number of ships attacked for the purpose of looting, high-jacking, and ransom surged off the coast of Nigeria in 2009, with a corresponding rise in the number of violent attacks, suggesting that the Somali pirate tactics may be having a contagion effect in West Africa.¹⁴ Well over 50 percent of the West African pirate attacks occur within Nigerian jurisdictional waters.

Historically, the majority of West African pirate attacks have been directly linked to oil bunkering or political agendas from militant groups like the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), that claims to expose exploitation and oppression of the people of the Niger Delta and devastation of the natural environment by public-private partnerships between the Federal Government of Nigeria and corporations involved in the extraction of oil in the Niger Delta. Competition for oil wealth has fueled violence between multiple ethnic groups, causing the militarization of nearly the entire delta region by ethnic militia groups as well as Nigerian military and police forces. Victims of crimes are fearful of seeking justice for crimes committed against them

¹² Human Rights Watch, "The Price of Oil", *Human Rights Watch*, (January 1999). <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/nigeria/> (accessed March 24, 2011).

¹³ ICC International Maritime Bureau, *Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Annual Report 1 January - 31 December 2010*. 5- 6.

¹⁴ Ibid., 3. In 2004, the International Maritime Organization rated the Gulf of Guinea second only to the Straits of Malacca in piracy attacks.

because of growing "impunity from prosecution for individuals responsible for serious human rights abuses, [which] has created a devastating cycle of increasing conflict and violence."¹⁵ A recent analysis of this group indicates its capabilities and its effect on the regional economy:

Gulf of Guinea countries are estimated to lose 55 million barrels of oil worth over \$1 billion annually to oil bunkering. This is significant, as West African oil supplies are expected to make up 25 percent of U.S. foreign oil imports by 2015, and militant attacks impacting West African oil already affect the price of oil on global stock markets. The role played by Nigerian militant groups, particularly the MEND, is well documented in kidnapping foreign oil workers for ransom, exploding oil pipelines when their demands have not been met, and simply siphoning off oil into their own barges for onward, illegal sales to tankers waiting in the Gulf of Guinea. By and large, these threats have taken place either on land or in "brown water" areas of the Delta. Recently, however, these attacks have moved beyond the Niger Delta and become more daring. In June 2008, MEND attacked Shell's Bonga oil platform 125 nautical miles offshore—a range previously considered untenable for Delta militants—resulting in a halt to 225,000 barrels per day of crude oil output. In September 2008, seaborne militants from Nigeria attacked the town of Limbe, Cameroon, from the sea. They barricaded roads into the town, repelled Cameroonian soldiers, shot up the local prefect's office, and used explosives to blast their way into banks, seizing large sums of money.¹⁶

Illicit Drug Trafficking

In recent years the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and other western law enforcement agencies have observed a significant rise in the transshipment, storage, cultivation and redistribution of illegal drugs from Africa. A Department of Justice report provides the following assessment:

Africa is experiencing an unprecedented rise in drug trafficking, and the growth of organized crime in Africa is an increasing national security threat, as evidenced by the integration of South American drug trafficking networks with African and European buyers and distributors. Organized criminal groups are exploiting governmental weakness and corruption prevalent in many African nations. There are obvious signs that Africa's vulnerability is being exploited by some of the world's most dangerous drug trafficking organizations. The global expansion of West African drug trafficking syndicates, such as Nigerian DTOs [Drug Transportation Organizations], has been

¹⁵ Human Rights Watch, *Violence in Nigeria's Oil Rich Rivers State in 2004*, February 2005, A Human Rights Watch briefing paper, <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/nigeria/> (accessed March 24, 2011).

¹⁶ Andre LeSage, "Africa's Irregular Security Threats: Challenges for U.S. Engagement", *Strategic Forum*, no. 255 (May 2010): 1-12. 5.

documented from Bangkok to Kabul; from Nairobi to Cape Town; and from Lima to Detroit. This expansion would not be possible without safe bases of operation on the African continent.¹⁷

Practically all the cocaine arriving in West Africa originates in South America and in 2007 Colombian officials estimated that approximately 35 percent of the cocaine being produced in South America was transported to Europe via West African transshipment locations.¹⁸ U.S. authorities estimate that more than 80 percent of the illegal cocaine entering West Africa arrives by sea, with the remaining 20 percent entering by air. The majority of the cocaine transported into West Africa by sea makes landfall at critical seaborne entry points in the coastal waters of Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Ghana.¹⁹

As the Congressional Research Service has assessed:

Criminal groups take advantage of Africa's porous borders, poorly-equipped and under-trained law enforcement agencies, and corrupt government officials to facilitate their trafficking operations. The significant rise in cocaine trafficking from South America to Europe, via established routes in Africa, presents a threat not only to Europe, but also to the U.S. The same South American DTOs responsible for transporting major cocaine shipments to the U.S. are using the African continent as a transit base/storage location for cocaine destined for European markets. The drug proceeds from cocaine trafficking return to these South American DTOs to further their illegal activities in the U.S., Africa and Europe.²⁰

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Justice statement from Thomas M. Harrigan Assistant Administrator and Chief of Operations, Operations Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, interview by Subcommittee on African Affairs, Committee on Foreign Relations U.S. Senate. *Confronting Drug Trafficking in West Africa* (June 23, 2009).

¹⁸ The U.S. and Europe have responsibility in the emergence of West Africa as a prominent locus for international drug trafficking. The enhanced U.S. drug interdiction and border control efforts to the south, combined with U.S. and European drug interdiction operations in the northern trans-Atlantic drug trafficking corridors from South America to Europe essentially pushed South American smuggling operations toward Africa's western coast. Additionally, Mexico's stepped up counter-drug operations against trafficking from Latin America in to the U.S. is also forcing DTOs to find alternate transit routes for their illicit drugs which is contributing to the increased West African drug flow. In the author's assessment there is a tremendous opportunity for combatant commander collaboration between U.S. Southern Command (USOUTHCOM), U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) against the illegal flow of drugs in to West Africa. In order to attack the problem at the source (South America), the middleman (West Africa) and the end user (Europe) counternarcotic operations have to span all three combatant commander theaters.

¹⁹ Liana Sun Wyler and Nicolas Cook, *Illegal Drug Trade in Africa: Trends and U.S. Policy*, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, (2010). 13.

²⁰ Ibid. 15.

Poor and limited maritime, air, and land surveillance systems, as well as limited seaport, airport, and border post security make the West African borders easily accessible. In addition, the high volume local trade and commerce between Gulf of Guinea coastal nations has given rise to busy ports in places like Gambia, Benin, and Togo with large scale import and re-export hubs that are useful conduits for illicit trafficking.²¹

Fishing Industry

It is estimated that approximately one million metric tons of fish are caught in the Gulf of Guinea annually, with more than one-third of the catch going to export, but it could be much higher.²² The fishing industry is threatened by illegal fishing, environmental degradation, and acts of piracy, which raises a serious maritime security concern for the coastal states. Pirate attacks, environmental abuses and illegal fishing severely affect both food security and economic development. The annual losses to the fishing industry are estimated to be between \$10 and \$23 billion.²³

The fish inventory in the Gulf of Guinea coastal region is being depleted at an alarming rate due to over-fishing and environmental degradations from oil spills, canalization, deforestation, intrusive dredging, and construction of hydroelectric dams. An inability to exercise control over their maritime domain has made it difficult for Gulf of Guinea states to enjoy the full benefits of their fishery resources. Piracy is now threatening this industry. The illicit piracy is a serious detriment to the seafood export

²¹ Wyler, 12.

²² Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN. *Food and Agriculture Organization 2006 Annual Report*, 2006. 11. <http://www4.fao.org/faobib/index.html> (accessed April 17, 2011).

²³ LeSage, 6.

business, but even worse, this criminal activity creates local and regional scarcity for the primary source of protein for the coastal nations in the Gulf of Guinea.²⁴

Why West Africa (Gulf of Guinea) should be Important to the U.S.

The Gulf of Guinea is rich in natural resources that contribute to the stability and prosperity of the region, as well as contributing to the health of the global economy. The region has emerged as the second largest pool of commercial petroleum resources in the world and recently surpassed the Persian Gulf as America's largest supplier of crude oil. But piracy, illicit drug trafficking, unlawful oil bunkering, environmental violations and illegal fishing are threatening to impede open sea lines limiting international trade and impairing the regional economy.

Despite years of substantial revenue growth from the oil and gas industry, high poverty rates and extreme income inequality persist throughout the region. A demographic youth bulge, rapid urbanization throughout West Africa, and a lack of public faith in government and the western oil companies provides potential for instability reflected in violent protests, revolts, and a multitude of criminal activities. Instability on land inevitably spills into the sea, creating an insecure maritime environment that threatens regional development, economic growth, and future prosperity. Contrary to the Somali Basin, instability in the Gulf of Guinea directly

²⁴ J. Peter Pham, *Africa's Other Dangerous Waters: Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea*. December 03, 2009. http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.4925/pub_detail.asp (accessed April 17, 2011). Maritime Security Task Force on Acts of Illegality in Nigerian Waters (IAMSTAF) reported December 2008 that Nigerian fishing boats suffered no fewer than 293 attacks between 2003 and 2008. The assaults ranged from demands for "protection" money from fishermen and the theft of catches to the wholesale theft of fishing boats and killing of their crews. Nigeria is losing some \$600 million in export revenues annually from piracy threats to the fishing industry alone.

influences security and economic prosperity. Strategically, West Africa is part of the Western Hemisphere.

As of April 2011, African oil imports to the continental U.S. was averaging 1.9 million barrels per day (bbl/d) and accounted for more than 18 percent of the total imports year to date, exceeding Persian Gulf imports by 336,000 bbl/day.²⁵ The U.S. has three oil conglomerates already operating in West Africa (ExxonMobil, Chevron and ConocoPhillips) with the capacity and will to dramatically increase their investments in the region if appropriate levels of security and stability can be achieved. Future U.S. engagements in the West African coastal zone must be closely aligned with commercial industry in order to achieve long-term energy security objectives and position the U.S. to effectively compete with other international players in the region.

As the previous strategic overview suggests, stability in the Gulf of Guinea is tenuous at best. In the current U.S. economic environment of anemic growth, high unemployment and a burgeoning national debt, a significant disruption in oil flow from the Gulf of Guinea could be devastating to the U.S. economy.

Commerce and Trade

Contrary to the commerce and trade that the U.S. has with East African states, which can be measured in millions of dollars annually, the multi-billion dollar trade with West African nations is growing significantly. A review of Table 2.1 shows that the import and export trade between West Africa and the U.S. grew by more than 37 percent

²⁵ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Crude Oil and Total Petroleum Imports Top 15 Countries*, April 2011.
http://www.eia.gov/pub/oil_gas/petroleum/data_publications/company_level_imports/current/import.html (accessed May 20, 2011).

between 2005 and 2010, with 11 states growing at even higher rates and only three of the 25 states experiencing import or export declines.

In 2008, amidst a global financial crisis, total U.S. trade increased by 28 percent with West Africa and was driven by growth in several sectors including: machinery, vehicles and parts, wheat, non-crude oil, aircraft, and electrical machinery (including telecommunications equipment). U.S. imports from oil producing countries in the Gulf of Guinea grew in all cases by as little as 4.4 percent in the case of Gabon and as much as 89.5 percent with Equatorial Guinea. In addition, as a positive sign of economic health and diversity, no single sector dominates import growth in West Africa. Instead, the import sectors that are enjoying growth are spread across a broad base including electrical and machinery components, refined oil, telecommunications equipment, vehicles, aircraft, iron and steel products, pharmaceutical products, medical equipment, apparel, footwear, ocean vessels, and wheat.²⁶

U.S. trade and commerce with West Africa is healthy and growing substantially. Combine that with the U.S. requirement for much higher levels of African oil exportation in the future, and it is clear the foundation exists for a prosperous economic expansion between the U.S. and West Africa if regional maritime security can prevail.

²⁶ U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, *U.S.- African Trade Profile 2009*, International Trade, Washington, DC:, July 2009. 2-8.

Table 2.2 U.S. Exports and Imports with West Africa

U.S. import/export data with West African nations for 2005 and 2010 in units of one million dollars U.S.				
	Imports		Exports	
Country	2005	2010	2005	2010
Mauritania	0.8	52.9	86.1	83.4
Senegal	3.7	5.1	141.5	217.7
Gambia	0.4	3.1	30.6	29.3
Guinea Bissau	0.1	0.9	2.1	4.3
Guinea	74.7	68.5	93.6	85.2
Sierra Leone	9.3	29.0	37.8	61.1
Liberia	90.8	180.0	69.3	190.1
Ivory Coast	1198.0	1176.8	124.2	162.6
Ghana	158.4	273.4	337.4	982.7
Togo	6.4	9.1	27.9	169.8
Benin	0.5	0.3	72.3	465.6
Nigeria	24239.4	30515.9	1619.8	4039.7
Cameroon	158.2	614.0	117.3	125.1
Eq. Guinea	1561.1	2215.9	281.5	271.1
Gabon	2815.6	2212.0	99.1	242.9
*Congo	1886.5	3843.6	169.1	347.9
Angola	8484.4	11946.9	929.0	1291.6
Burkina Faso	2.1	2.4	25.1	46.6
Cape Verde	2.6	1.4	9.9	10.0
Central African Rep	5.7	5.7	14.8	10.3
Chad	1498.1	2044.1	53.8	88.2
Mali	3.6	6.3	32.4	37.3
Niger	65.5	26.5	78.5	48.9
Sao Tome and Principe	0.2	0.3	10.2	1.4
TOTAL:	42266.1	55234.1	4463.2	9012.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "U.S. Trade in Goods (Imports, Exports and Balance) by Country database." U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics. 2010. <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/index.html#S> (accessed February 25, 2011).

Illicit Narcotics

U.S. national interests in the expanding drug trade through West Africa goes well beyond the interdiction of drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) and their operatives. Even though the majority of the drugs flowing in to West Africa are bound for Europe, the proceeds from those illicit operations go back to the same South American operatives that are targeting the U.S. markets from south of the border. Within the region, the illicit monies add instability and threaten security when used to buy off corrupt law enforcement agencies, militaries, politicians and border patrols.

This raises the risk that some regional states may collapse under sustained pressure from local and foreign drug trafficking operations. Most coastal governments do not have the economic capacity or political will to deal with the drug threat while challenged with poverty, famine and disease. The criminals are exploiting the dire conditions in West Africa and putting a fragile region at greater risk. The human rights violations, corruption, health risks and depletion of natural and human resources undermine the local rule of law. The political instability on land eventually spills in to the sea, adding risk to the regional maritime operations that U.S. energy and economic security is dependent on.

Environmental Responsibility

The West African governments as well as foreign industry have an equal responsibility to protect the environment. Corporations doing business in these states have an obligation to take proactive measures that protect the environment, respect the local population and their values, and ensure they are not complicit with environmental violations. Given the overwhelming role of the oil industry in the Gulf of Guinea

economy, the policies and practices of these companies are important factors in the decision making of the local governments. Since the oil companies have contractual engagements directly with the governments they have the opportunity to influence government policy with respect to oil facility security measures, environmental regulations and oil spill clean-up.

As history has shown, threats to the delta region agriculture and fishing industries and the local health of the populace from petroleum spills, leads to protest and revolt. If the residents of the effected region perceive that government and industry are compliant or indifferent of the environmental abuses, they will probably resort to violent and destructive tactics that weaken government capacity and directly threaten oil security. A deterioration in the regional rule of law and violent attacks on oil industry infrastructure leads to reduced oil flow, which is devastating to the economic stability and prosperity in the Gulf of Guinea, and directly threatens U.S. energy security. Addressing the environmental issues in the Niger Delta sub-region goes directly to the source of the problem that instigates local violence and criminal activity that threatens the regions security on land and sea.

CHAPTER 4: ACHIEVING A MATURE MARITIME SECURITY STRATEGY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

As presented above, there are important U.S. national interests in the Gulf of Guinea that are threatened by numerous maritime instabilities. Piracy, illicit trafficking, illegal fishing, severe environmental violations, and many other debilitating maritime activities are threatening the security and well-being of the local populace, as well as the stability of fragile democratic governments. These same regional threats pose a serious risk to vital economic and geographic interests for the U.S., and if left unattended, could lead to costly unplanned military, economic, humanitarian and environmental responses in the future. Poorly developed and misdirected national guidance can lead to an immature strategy that fails to balance strategic ends, ways and means, lacks effective objectives and is deficient of an end-state that supports future withdrawal of U.S. assets.

Good national strategy that informs combatant and component commanders through the *National Defense and Military Strategies (NDS/NMS)*, *Unified Command Plan (UCP)*, *Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF)*, *Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP)* and other Department of Defense (DOD) directives should lead to a highly effective and mature theater strategy that satisfies vital national interests. A mature strategy flows from understanding the political endstate and guidance as well as understanding the nature of the environment. Creating synergy and balance between the ways and means will create the effects necessary to achieve stated objectives. National policy typically provides the foundation for strategy with its articulation of endstates and guidance regarding resources and capabilities. From the political endstates and guidance, strategic objectives emerge that provide purpose, focus, and justification for the actions embodied in strategy.

This chapter will present a simple, yet necessary, five-step process for the national level strategist that should lead to a mature maritime strategy for the coastal region of West Africa. The steps are simple, but require the efforts of a strategic design team with broad interagency (IA) representation. Steps one through four represents what is commonly referred to as strategic design, with its purpose being to identify and formulate the problem to be solved. Identifying and formulating the problem, its underlying causes, and manifestations within the environment will aid the strategist in uncovering approaches to solving the problem. If the strategist understands the situation then appropriate strategic objectives begin to surface intuitively, which enables national strategic design to guide theater level planning.

Step - 1: Identify National Interests within the Regional Environment

From the *National Security Strategy* (NSS), the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* (NSMS), the *Policy for the Repression of Piracy and other Criminal Acts of Violence at Sea* (Piracy Policy), and President Obama's priorities for African engagement, five categories of national strategic interest in Africa were identified: oil and global trade, maritime security, armed conflict, violent extremism, and prevention of HIV/AIDS. As it pertains to this paper, both oil and global trade and maritime security emerged as vital national interests in Africa, particularly in the Gulf of Guinea sub-region. In order to satisfy the NSS objective for a strong, innovative, and growing U.S. economy, free and open international trade is essential.

Recognizing that 80 percent or more of today's global trade is conducted over the high seas, maritime security and free access to global commons are critical requirements for a healthy U.S. economy. Informed by the NSS, the NSMS strategic objectives to

promote international maritime security and to safeguard the ocean and its resources from unlawful exploitation and intentional damage directly support a strong U.S. economy through free and open international trade that leads to global prosperity.

Following a review of the national policy and strategy, the strategist determines that the following national interests apply within the maritime domain of the Gulf of Guinea: a strong and growing U.S. and regional economy; U.S. energy security supported by West African oil; and regional maritime security that supports prosperous, free and open trade with West Africa.

Step - 2: Determine Level of Priority and Limitations to Regional Engagement

In order to avoid an immature strategy, national level strategists and political leadership must promulgate strategic guidance that achieves desired endstates (ends) through available resources (means) and capabilities (ways). Because no nation has unlimited capacity to employ instruments of national power, a good strategy must be balanced and prioritized. If the strategic ends, ways, and means are out of balance, accomplishment of the strategic objectives is at risk.

Informed by the environmental assessments presented in chapters 2 and 3, it was determined that U.S. interests in coastal West Africa are a higher priority than those in the Somali Basin and that the free flow of oil and global trade in West Africa is of critical importance to U.S. economic stability and energy security. With the awareness that U.S. priorities exist and are worthy of engagement in the Gulf of Guinea, the strategist can consider strategic balance and limitations.

Referring back to national guidance, both the NSMS and Piracy Policy provide specific direction in the application of strategic balance and limitations. The NSMS

emphasizes that maritime security will not come from the U.S. acting alone, “but through a powerful coalition of nations maintaining a strong, united, international front,” to include a whole of government approach that “seamlessly employ[s] all instruments of national power in a fully coordinated manner in concert with other nation-states.”¹ The Piracy Policy compliments the NSMS and further emphasizes that a U.S. response to the threat of piracy will require a regional assessment and prioritization with respect to geography, local politics, and the legal environment. In addition, any counter piracy engagement will incorporate the following guiding principles:

1. [The U.S. will] cooperate with other states and international and regional organizations in the repression of piracy and other criminal acts of violence against maritime navigation.
2. [T]he responsibility for countering this threat does not belong exclusively to the United States.
3. [The U.S. will] engage states and international and regional organizations to develop greater resources, capacity, and authorities to repress piracy and maximize inclusion of coalition assets in piracy repression operations.
4. Piracy repression should include diplomatic, military, intelligence, economic, law enforcement, and judicial actions and requires coordination by all departments and agencies of the U.S. Government.²

With this guidance the strategist recognizes that strategic balance will not be achieved by the U.S. military instruments alone and that a whole of government approach using all instruments of national power is mandated. As a result the strategist must seek out U.S. objectives through a whole of government unity of effort in collaboration with coastal states, international and regional organizations, and other partnerships.

¹ White House, *The National Strategy for Maritime Security*, Washington, DC:, 20 September 2005. 13.

² White House, *Maritime Security (Piracy) Policy*. White House, President George W. Bush, June 14, 2007. <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2007/06/20070614-3.html> (accessed December 21, 2010).

Step - 3: Establish a Strategic Framework

In order to develop good strategy that satisfies strategic objectives, strategists must understand the problem, comprehend the complex environment and consider a strategic design that solves the problem by going after causal factors. Strategy rises from immaturity to maturity when it incorporates strategic objectives that go after the source of the problem, while satisfying national and theater level strategic endstates. Anything less leads to immature strategy that misapplies means and fails to further national objectives.

The purpose of this step is for the strategist to identify both strategic threats and opportunities as they exist in the environment. Strategic framing should be developed without boundaries to yield an expansive list of threats and opportunities that are directly related to the regional problem that is influencing U.S. interests. Prioritized threats and opportunities are derived in the following step and will form the basis for strategic objectives that satisfy national and regional level endstates.

Informed by national interests and objectives from steps one and two, the author concludes that the fundamental problem in the Gulf of Guinea is regional maritime instability, which threatens the flow of oil and global trade and could severely threaten U.S. energy security and economic stability. While the basic problem is simple, the key factors contributing to maritime instability are numerous and complex. Earlier analysis showed that piracy, illicit trafficking, armed militia, environmental abuses, sabotage, kidnapping and illegal fishing were just some of the factors contributing to maritime instability. The strategic framework that emerges from this step will capture an exhaustive and complete list of regional threats and opportunities that can be linked to the source of the problem. Table 3.1 presents examples of threats and opportunities as they

exist in the Gulf of Guinea and fairly represents the strategic framework that comes out of a cursory assessment of the environment.

Table 3.3 Gulf of Guinea Threats and Opportunities

Threats	Opportunities
Piracy	Democratic Governance
Oil bunkering	Vast natural resources with large oil and natural gas reserves
Illicit trafficking (narcotics and weapons)	Freedom of navigation (no chokepoints)
Environmental violations (oil spills)	Regional urbanization and trade throughout the Gulf of Guinea
Contaminated Niger Delta	Arable and highly productive land
Oil pipelines and transportation infrastructure in disrepair	Diverse sea life and fertile fishing waters
Armed militia (MEND and others)	Agriculture and manufacturing sectors growing
Sabotage of oil industry infrastructure	Growing economy with expanding GDP
Widespread poverty	Growing international trade and commerce
Fragile and corrupt governments	28 deep draft sea ports that support international trade
Demographic youth bulge	Navigable Niger River
Illegal fishing	Western oil and gas industry investment
Oil and gas wealth not making it down to general population	Strong and mutual support for a regional coast guard
Poor education	Nigerian Navy and military
Health concerns (HIV/AIDS and environmental contamination)	Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA)
Tribalism and competition amongst ethnic groups	Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS)
Mistrust of local government, oil industry and America	UN, EU and AU engagements

Step - 4: Identify Strategic Objectives and Prioritize

Four broad strategic objectives (Implement strategic communications; Secure the maritime domain; Protect the environment; and Enhance economic opportunities) emerge from the design process. These prioritized objectives mitigate threats and take advantage of existing opportunities as they exist in the Gulf of Guinea environment with respect to U.S. national interest. A summary of the priority objectives with key subcomponents follows:

1) Implement Strategic Communications Plan

- Build regional trust and confidence in U.S. efforts.
- Win hearts and minds.

2) Secure the Maritime Domain

- Establish and maintain robust maritime domain awareness (MDA).
- Suppress piracy and illicit trafficking in the maritime domain.
- Suppress violent protests and revolts, sabotage and kidnapping of local government officials and oil industry representatives.
- Suppress illegal fishing and criminal attacks on legitimate fishing.
- Support and promote the development of a regional coast guard and or navy.
- Ensure pirates, illicit traffickers and operatives, poachers and other criminals within the maritime domain are prosecuted.

3) Protect the Environment

- Protect oil industry infrastructure and ensure oil and gas industries implement effective security measures.
- Ensure the oil and gas industries operate responsibly and protect the health and welfare of local residents from environmental abuses.
- U.S. to lead effort to clean up and revitalize the Niger Delta from decades of environmental abuses. This effort will have the collaboration of commercial industry, local states, regional organizations and the international community.

4) Enhance Economic Opportunities

- Restore agricultural opportunities in the Niger Delta.

- Protect and invigorate fishing industry.
- Expand port, coastal and border security operations.
- Increase U.S. Government and corporate investment in region.
- Improve wealth distribution of oil and gas industry revenues.

Step - 5: Promulgate National Policy and Strategic Guidance

At this point in the process the strategist must present the strategic design to the political leadership and garner the appropriate resources and commitment to a whole of government approach that unifies all instruments of national power to achieve the desired endstates. With such a commitment, political authorities will promulgate what was learned in steps one through four through national policy and strategic directives. This in turn provides foundational national guidance that the Theater Commander, (United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) in this case), will incorporate into the Theater Campaign Plan (TCP).

National guidance must be careful to not inadvertently restrict the operational art and design that regional commanders, country teams, and other theater level representatives can develop with their detailed knowledge and understanding of the environment, threats, and opportunities. At the theater level, the strategic planning team will link national objectives with regional objectives through the operational design phase to ensure both regional and national endstates are achieved during the execution of the TCP. Appendix-1 provides an example of the key components of a national level action plan that supports a mature maritime strategy, and provides detailed guidance to the combatant and component commanders, and secures U.S. national interests in the Gulf of Guinea. To ensure strategic awareness and agreement at the national and theater levels, the results of the strategic design should be included in the *Guidance for Employment of the Force* (GEF) to officially inform the Theater Commander of national level guidance.

At the Combatant Commander Level

National policy and strategic guidance flows to the unified commander through the periodic update of multiple DOD directives like the *National Defense and Military Strategy, Unified Command Plan, Global Employment of the Forces and Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan*; or through a national directive like the NSC 2008 Action Plan. The national guidance derived from steps one through five will cause the combatant commander to initiate a review and update of the TCP. The planning team conducting the TCP update will incorporate the new strategic objectives, specified tasks, limitations and other national guidance. Of note, it is essential that the theater planning team also conduct a strategic design process as outlined in steps one through five. Without a full appreciation of the strategic design products at the national and theater level, planners and strategists risk not having a common understanding of the objectives, threats, opportunities and endstates.

With new or modified regional objectives derived from national guidance, the planning team embarks on the operational design phase, which requires an environmental assessment at the state and regional organizational level. Contrary to the environmental assessment presented in chapter 3, which is adequate at the national strategic level, the regional assessment is looking for threats and opportunities at the state level. As a case in point, the threats in the Niger Delta stemming from decades of environmental abuse are vastly different from those in Cote d'Ivoire, where the country is struggling to recover from recent internal conflicts following a disputed presidential election.

With threats and opportunities identified at the state level, the planning team conducts a prioritization process to determine where the greatest risk and opportunities exist within the theater. Ultimately, this process provides a prioritized country list with

prioritized activities linked to objectives through lines of effort (LOE) that will define the combatant commander's TCP engagement strategy. LOEs are particularly useful for the combatant commander when working with interagency and multinational partners in either a supporting or supported capacity.³ They enable the commander to visualize how military means can support nonmilitary instruments of national power and vice versa.

USAFRICOM's TCP will promote U.S. strategic objectives by working with Gulf of Guinea states and other regional organizations like The Maritime Organization of Western and Central Africa, Economic Community of West African States, Gulf of Guinea Commission, and African Union to strengthen regional stability and security. As the lead DOD agent in the Gulf of Guinea, USAFRICOM will support other U.S. Government (USG) departments and agencies in implementing national strategic objectives. In concert with international, regional, coalition and USG partners, USAFRICOM conducts theater security cooperation activities that are designed to build capacity and improve the capability and quality of local governance, law enforcement, military, border patrol, coast guard and host of other security related agencies. Regional endstates that achieve regional law and order, promote peace and security, create citizen opportunities and stimulate economic growth and prosperity will secure vital U.S. interests and strengthen a partnership with West African nations who in turn will embrace long-term U.S. security interests.

³ The interagency (IA) partners that will have to collaborate with AFRICOM in the planning and execution of a mature maritime security strategy in the Gulf of Guinea will consist of the following USG departments and agencies at a minimum: Department of State, Department of Justice (DEA), Department of Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy, Department of Commerce and Department of Homeland Security (USCG).

Ultimately, U.S. national and regional objectives must be supported by Gulf of Guinea states and regional organizations, which mandate the need to build and support regional capacity and capability in the execution of all strategic objectives. A strategy that fails to incorporate the successful achievement of endstates and a U.S. exit strategy cannot be considered a mature strategy.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Informed by personal experience with ineffective maritime security and piracy suppression operations in the Somali Basin, and a thorough understanding of what is required for good strategy from a recent Joint Advanced Warfighting School education, the author set out to investigate what appeared to be a failed counter-piracy strategy in the Somali Basin. The initial research for this paper sought to validate the hypothesis that the Somali Basin maritime security strategy was immature and ineffective. During the research it became apparent that the strategy was immature in design because it failed to go after the source of the piracy problem; and it also failed to address any vital or important U.S. national interests, while expending vast maritime resources to chase Somali based piracy.

The solution to the immature counter-piracy strategy in the Somali Basin is more likely abandonment rather than re-design. Recognizing that no nation has unlimited capacity for the employment of the instruments of national power and that maritime instability is prevalent throughout the world, the U.S. commitment to Somali Basin piracy appeared to be misinformed. More important U.S. national interests lie elsewhere. An analysis of national security interests and objectives indicated that counter-piracy operations in the Somali Basin are informed by an immature strategy that fails to balance strategic ends, ways, and means. It lacks achievable objectives, and is deficient of an endstate that defines accomplishment of anything other than maintaining the current status quo. This analysis also reveals that West African maritime instability and security threats pose a far more serious risk to U.S. vital economic and geographic interests than if

left unattended, could lead to costly unplanned military, economic, humanitarian or environmental responses in the future.

Chapter 1 showed that the Somali Basin maritime security strategy was immature from two perspectives: it did not satisfy U.S. national interests and it was an ill-conceived strategic design. The problems in the Somali Basin, although serious, do not pose a vital or important threat to U.S. economic security or prosperity. Driven by policy considerations, the *2008 Partnership and Action Plan for Countering Piracy Off the Horn of Africa* (NSC 2008 Action Plan) unwisely promoted piracy suppression in the Somali Basin as a vital U.S. interest. The ongoing U.S. military actions to suppress piracy were misinformed by an NSC directive that prioritized a peripheral problem to the level of a vital national interest. In turn, USCENTCOM and the U.S. Navy began applying valuable resources to address a problem that poses minimal risk to U.S. strategic interests.

Contrary to U.S. energy security policy prior to 2001, the geographical regions and global commons that are critical to U.S. energy security today and in the future are no longer in the Middle East. The rapid decline in U.S. demand for Persian Gulf oil has been complimented by a corresponding rise in oil imports from West and North Africa and Brazil, demonstrating that U.S. energy security interests are shifting.

Even though seven-and-a-half percent of the world's total ocean trade transits the Suez Canal, U.S. imports and exports through the Suez Canal are minimal.¹ The U.S. shipments through the Suez Canal, including oil and non-oil products, is less than 5

¹ World Shipping Council, "The Suez Canal - A vital shortcut for global commerce", World Shipping Council, Partners in Trade. n.d. <http://www.worldshipping.org/pdf/Suez-Canal-Presentation.pdf> (accessed February 23, 2011).

percent of the total cargo transiting the canal annually. Considering that U.S. flagged ships make up less than one percent of the traffic transiting the Gulf of Aden (GOA), the risk to pirate attack is very low, and unlike most nations, the U.S. has mandated that U.S. flagged vessels transiting the GOA or Horn of Africa will employ armed or unarmed security detachments for piracy prevention.² With minimal U.S. commercial shipping in the region, combined with the robust implementation of anti-piracy security measures by U.S. flagged ships, the Somali based piracy poses only minimal risk to the U.S. shipping industry operating in the Somali Basin, and essentially no risk to U.S. economic security and stability.

U.S. commerce and trade in and around the Somali Basin is also negligible, with very little opportunity for improvement near-term. Half of the East African littoral states (Somalia, Kenya, Madagascar and Eritrea) had decreasing trade and commerce with the U.S. between 2005 and 2010, demonstrating that the already low U.S. economic activity in this region is declining. To highlight the insignificance of U.S. trade and commerce in the Somali Basin, one only has to look to Canada and China, where the U.S. traded more each day in 2010 with these two countries than it did over an entire year with all East African nations combined.³

Disregarding the lack of U.S. national interests summarized above, it is important to review the factors that led to the implementation of an ineffective strategic design.

² Maritime Administration, *Advisory 2010-06 GUIDANCE TO VESSELS TRANSITING HIGH RISK WATERS*, Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, March 29, 2010. http://www.marad.dot.gov/news_room_landing_page/maritime_advisories/advisory/advisory2010-06.htm (accessed December 21, 2010).

³ U.S. Census Bureau, "Top Trading Partners-Total Trade, Exports, Imports", *U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics*, 2010. <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/highlights/top/top1012yr.html> (accessed February 25, 2011).

The NSC 2008 Action Plan failed to incorporate an endstate and critical guidance that was promulgated in the September 2005 *National Strategy for Maritime Security* (NSMS) and the June 2007 *Policy for the Repression of Piracy and other Criminal Acts of Violence at Sea* (Piracy Policy). In turn, the NSC 2008 Action Plan implemented an immature piracy suppression strategy in the USCENTCOM Area of Responsibility.

The African maritime environment presents complex strategic and operational challenges that cannot be solved with military ways and means alone. If counter-piracy efforts in the Somali Basin are going to be effective, lines of operation have to be planned and implemented to go after the source of the problem and prevent pirates from putting out to sea. The NSC failed to understand, or at least acknowledge, the root causes behind piracy in the Somali Basin before promulgating the NSC 2008 Action Plan. The plan reacted to the highly visible piracy in the Somali Basin, which is only a manifested symptom to a much deeper and complex problem. Despite good intentions, tremendous resources, and U.S. commitment to piracy suppression, the NSC 2008 Action Plan put into motion and prioritized lines of operation that attack the symptoms and not the problems that originate on land and spill in to the maritime domain.

With limited or inadequate means and only peripheral threats to national security, the U.S. commitment to Somali Basin piracy should have been limited, but instead the issuance of the NSC 2008 directive made the problem a strategic priority. Worse, it defined three lines of action, none of which addressed the root cause of the problem. Scarce U.S. assets are being expended to repress piracy in a maritime region that is not linked to U.S. energy and economic interests. In addition, resources are being expended

to protect and support the shipping industry that is unwilling to bear the cost to implement effective deterrents and protective measures to thwart piracy.

As previously stated, the factors that can lead to or contribute to piracy are generally categorized as poor economic conditions, lack of governance, geographical opportunities and social acceptance of the illicit behavior. Because the NSC 2008 Action Plan does not attack the root of the piracy problem – the collapse of governance in Somalia since 1991 – the maritime efforts cannot end the threat, leaving the U.S. trapped in a frustrating stalemate with no end in sight.

The NSC direction for counter-piracy operations in the Somali Basin does not reflect strategy, rather only a reaction to a compelling need to promptly react to a dramatic increase in regional piracy that has attracted world attention. The NSC's lines of action reflect a pseudo – strategic approach that attacked the superficial symptoms of the actual underlying problems. It is in the interest of the developed and economically strong developing nations that consume more than 86 percent of the oil shipped out of the Persian Gulf to commit resources, time and energy to securing the Somali Basin maritime domain. The U.S. should take a leadership role in mentoring and convincing international organizations and nations to develop and execute a successful strategy that can lead to a secure, stable, economically solvent and governed Somalia. There are many nations in the Middle and Far East that have vital and important interests in Somali Basin stability and security. These nations need to work together with the framework of a mature strategy to eliminate Somali piracy and other criminal activity in the region.

African oil, global trade, and the maritime security are identified in the NSS as a core interest for U.S. economic security and prosperity. Additionally, the NSMS and the

Piracy Policy both address global trade and maritime security as supporting U.S. national and regional strategic interests in Africa. With an awareness of U.S. national interests, an environmental assessment of the Gulf of Guinea revealed that the region holds important national interests and is subject to significant maritime instability.

The Gulf of Guinea is rich in natural resources that contribute to the stability and prosperity of the region, as well as contributing to the health of the global economy. The region has emerged as the second largest pool of commercial petroleum resources in the world and recently surpassed the Persian Gulf as America's largest supplier of crude oil. But piracy, illicit drug trafficking, unlawful oil bunkering, environmental violations and illegal fishing are threatening to impede open sea lines limiting international trade and impairing the regional economy.

As of April 2011, African oil imports to the continental U.S. exceeded Persian Gulf imports by 336,000 bbl/day, and it is projected that U.S. demand for African oil will grow by more than 50 percent in the next five years.⁴ With Gulf of Guinea oil flow to the U.S. at nearly one million bbl/day and anticipated growth at more than 50 percent, the fragile stability in the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain is worthy of U.S. engagement.

Contrary to the commerce and trade that the U.S. has with East African states, the U.S. multi-billion dollar trade and commerce with West Africa is healthy and growing substantially. Combine that with the U.S. requirement for much higher levels of African oil in the future, and it is clear the foundation exists for a prosperous economic expansion between the U.S. and West Africa if regional maritime security can be achieved.

⁴ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Crude Oil and Total Petroleum Imports Top 15 Countries*, April 2011.
http://www.eia.gov/pub/oil_gas/petroleum/data_publications/company_level_imports/current/import.html
(accessed May 20, 2011).

As previously stated, 35 percent or more of the cocaine being produced in South America is flowing to the shores of West Africa. The proceeds from this illicit activity goes right back to the same South American operatives that are targeting the U.S. markets from south of the border. Within the region, the illicit monies add instability to fragile governments that lack the economic and security capacity to deal with the drug threat. This in turn increases political instability on land which eventually spills in to the sea, adding risk to the regional maritime operations that U.S. energy and economic security is dependent on.

Despite the enormity of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill during the summer of 2010, it does not seem near as dire when compared to the nearly 11 million gallons of oil per year being spilled in the Niger Delta since the 1960s.⁵ As history has shown the damaging effects of petroleum spills in the delta, leads to protest and revolt. If the residents of the effected region perceive that federal government and industry are compliant or indifferent of the environmental abuses, they will resort to violent and destructive tactics that weaken government capacity and directly threaten the oil industry security. A deterioration in the regional rule of law and violent attacks on oil industry infrastructure leads to reduced oil flow, which is devastating to the economic stability and prosperity in the Gulf of Guinea, and directly threatens U.S. energy security.

There are important U.S. national interests in the Gulf of Guinea that are threatened by vast maritime instabilities. Piracy, illicit trafficking, illegal fishing, severe environmental violations and many other debilitating maritime activities are impacting

⁵ As many as 546 million gallons of oil spilled into the Niger Delta over the last five decades, or nearly 11 million gallons a year. This was concluded by a team of experts for the Nigerian government and international and local environmental groups in a 2006 report.

the security and well-being of the local populace, as well as the stability of fragile democratic governments. These same regional threats pose a serious risk to vital economic and geographic interests for the U.S., and if left unattended, could lead to costly unplanned military, economic, humanitarian and/or environmental responses in the future.

In order to develop good strategy that satisfies strategic objectives, strategists must understand the problem, comprehend the complex environment and consider a strategic design that solves the problem by going after causal factors. Strategy rises from immaturity to maturity when it incorporates strategic objectives that go after the source of the problem, while satisfying national and theater level strategic endstates. Anything less leads to immature strategy that misapplies means and fails to further national objectives.

With the support of political leadership and a common understanding of the problems, threats, opportunities, and objectives at the national and theater level, USAFRICOM can build a mature Gulf of Guinea security strategy in to their TCP. The TCP should promote U.S. strategic objectives by working with Gulf of Guinea states and other regional organizations like The Maritime Organization of Western and Central Africa, Economic Community of West African States, Gulf of Guinea Commission, and African Union to strengthen regional stability and security. As the lead DOD agent in the Gulf of Guinea, USAFRICOM will support other U.S. Government (USG) departments and agencies in implementing national strategic objectives. A unified whole of government approach that achieves national and regional endstates in the Gulf of Guinea region will require the following USG departments and agencies at a minimum: Department of Defense, Department of State, Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement

Agency, Department of Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy, Department of Commerce, Department of Homeland Security and the United States Coast Guard.

In concert with international, regional, coalition and USG partners USAFRICOM should conduct theater security cooperation activities that are designed to build capacity and improve the capability and quality of local governance, law enforcement, military, border patrol, coast guard and host of other security related agencies. Regional endstates that achieve regional law and order, promote peace and security, create citizen opportunities and stimulate economic growth and prosperity will secure vital U.S. interests and strengthen a partnership with West African nations who in turn will embrace long-term U.S. security interests.

Ultimately, U.S. national and regional objectives must be fulfilled by Gulf of Guinea states and regional organizations, which mandate the requirement to enhance and support regional capacity and capability in the execution of all strategic objectives. A strategy that fails to incorporate the successful achievement of endstates and redeployment of critical U.S. resources cannot be considered a mature strategy.

Appendix – 1: Example of National Level Plan of Action for the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Security Strategy

- Work with regional states, MOWCA, ECOWAS, AU and other regional and international organizations to promote a regional maritime security effort in the Gulf of Guinea that will effectively and efficiently enhance the security of the maritime domain while preserving the freedom of the domain for legitimate pursuits.
- Work with states, international and regional organizations to safeguard the Gulf of Guinea and its resources from unlawful exploitation and intentional critical damage.
- Support regional states and organizations, and lead a coalition of foreign nations to maintain a strong, united, international front in the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain.
- Seamlessly employ all instruments of U.S. national power in a fully coordinated manner in concert with other nation-states to achieve and maintain a secure maritime domain in the Gulf of Guinea.
- Work closely with regional governments and international and regional organizations to enhance the maritime security capabilities of the Gulf of Guinea states by:
 - o Offering maritime and port security assistance, training, and consultation;
 - o Coordinating and prioritizing maritime security assistance and liaison within the Gulf of Guinea region;
 - o Allocating economic assistance to regional states and organization in pursuit of Gulf of Guinea maritime security;
 - o Expanding the International Port Security and Maritime Liaison Officer Programs, and the number of agency attachés in the Gulf of Guinea region.
- Integrate all-source intelligence, law enforcement information, and open-source data from the public and private sectors. Establish and maintain robust maritime domain awareness in the Gulf of Guinea with information sharing and unprecedented cooperation among the various elements of the public and private sectors, both nationally and internationally.
- Ensure commercial industry embeds security into their industrial operations. The oil and gas industry is the first line of defense for their own property in the Gulf of Guinea.
- Cooperate with other states and international and regional organizations in the repression of piracy, illicit trafficking and other criminal acts of violence in the Gulf of Guinea.
 - o The responsibility for countering these threats does not belong exclusively to the United States.
 - o Engage states and international and regional organizations to develop greater resources, capacity, and authorities to repress piracy and illicit trafficking in the Gulf of Guinea. Maximize the inclusion of regional naval, coast guard and law enforcement agencies in the repression of piracy and illicit trafficking.
 - o Gulf of Guinea piracy and illicit trafficking repression efforts shall include diplomatic, military, intelligence, economic, law enforcement, and judicial actions and requires coordination by all departments and agencies of the U.S. Government.
 - o Prevent pirate attacks and other criminal acts of violence against U.S. vessels, persons, and interests.
 - o Interrupt and terminate acts of piracy consistent with international law and the rights and responsibilities of coastal and flag states.
 - o Interrupt and terminate the illicit trafficking of narcotics, weapons, humans and other illegal contraband in the Gulf of Guinea region.
 - o Ensure that those who commit acts of piracy and illicit trafficking in the Gulf of Guinea are held accountable for their actions by facilitating the prosecution of suspected pirates and traffickers.
 - o Ensure that persons suspected of committing acts of violence against maritime navigation are held accountable by flag and littoral states as appropriate.
 - o Preserve the freedom of the seas in the Gulf of Guinea region.
 - o Lead and support international efforts to repress piracy, illicit trafficking and acts of violence against maritime navigation in the Gulf of Guinea and urge other states to take decisive action both individually and through international efforts.

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency shall lead an effort to work with regional states and agencies, oil and gas industry representatives, other U.S. Government departments and agencies and international and regional organizations as applicable to:
 - o Ensure appropriate environmental protection standards are employed in Gulf of Guinea offshore drilling operations.
 - o Ensure post Horizon Oil Spill lessons learned are available to oil producing states and local industry in the Gulf of Guinea.
 - o Assess the extent of environmental contamination and damage in the Niger Delta region and develop a plan of action for regional clean up and restoration that involves the collaborative efforts of the U.S. resources, local states and governments, commercial industry, and other international and regional organizations as applicable.

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CAPT Ray A. Stapf, USN

CAPT Stapf enlisted in the Navy in 1982. In 1988 he received a Bachelor of Science degree from New York State University and received a naval commission from Officer Candidate School at Newport, Rhode Island in November 1988.

In May of 1990 CAPT Stapf reported aboard USS NITRO (AE 23). During his 41-month tour on NITRO he deployed to the Arabian Gulf in support of Operations Desert Shield and Storm. From December 1993 to May 1995, CAPT Stapf attended the Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, California. He reported to USS PLATTE (AO 186) as the Chief Engineer in 1996. In October 1998, CAPT Stapf reported to USS OAK HILL (LSD 51) as the Chief Engineer. This assignment marked his transition from the Combat Logistics Fleet to Amphibious Warfare. During his tour on board USS OAK HILL, he deployed to the Mediterranean as part of the WASP Amphibious Ready Group.

In August 2000 CAPT Stapf reported to Assault Craft Unit FOUR as the Operations Officer. During his assignment he deployed seven Landing Craft Air Cushion Detachments consisting of 37 craft and more than 280 personnel. In July of 2002, CAPT Stapf reported to USS NASHVILLE (LPD 13) as the Executive Officer. In 2003, the NASHVILLE and her crew conducted a historic eight-month combat deployment in direct support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and Joint Task Force Liberia Humanitarian Support. In February 2004 CAPT Stapf reported to US Fleet Forces Command N3/5 Directorate as the Current and Future Surface Operations Officer, which included collateral duties as the NATO and USSOUTHCOM Surface Operations Liaison Officer and the amphibious operations subject matter expert.

In March 2006 CAPT Stapf assumed Command of USS OAK HILL (LSD 51) and led his crew through a highly successful surge deployment in support of Maritime Security Operations in the Red Sea, Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Subsequently, the OAK HILL and crew deployed as part of the BATAAN Expeditionary Strike Group and conducted Maritime Security, Amphibious Operations and Theater Security Cooperation Exercises in the Fifth and Sixth Fleets, between January and July 2007.

Following his command tour, CAPT Stapf reported to Commander Naval Surface Force Atlantic as the Deputy Maintenance and C5I Officer from September 2007 to July 2010. He is currently attending the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in Norfolk, VA and will report to United States European Command in August 2011.